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RECOLLECTIONS

OF

MARSHAL MACDONALD

A. Sandoz del. H. Vernet pinxit. Outhwaite sc

THE BATTLE OF HANAU

RECOLLECTIONS

OF

MARSHAL MACDONALD

DUKE OF TARENTUM

EDITED BY

CAMILLE ROUSSET

(MEMBER OF THE FRENCH ACADEMY)

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Translated by

STEPHEN LOUIS SIMEON

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IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II.

94-n-19

LONDON

RICHARD BENTLEY AND SON

Publishers in Ordinary to Her Majesty the Queen

1892

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RECOLLECTIONS OF
MARSHAL MACDONALD
DUKE OF TARENTUM

CHAPTER I.

Dismissal of Bernadotte—Armistice—Breakfast with Napoleon—Vandamme's Outburst—Return to Gratz—Independence of the Archduke—Recognition of the Armistice—Grand Cordon of the Legion of Honour—Duke of Tarentum—Divorce of the Emperor—Evacuation of Styria—Marriage Negotiations—Marriage of the Emperor.

AFTER breakfast the Viceroy proposed to me to accompany him to the Emperor's headquarters at Wolkersdorf, but I had no fresh horses, and, moreover, was suffering a good deal from the kick I had received.

'But,' I observed, 'here we are in hot pursuit of the Austrians. If the Archduke John, who is commanding their other army, and ought to be at Presburg, pursues us in his turn, he may be able to damage our rear seriously. I suppose that the Emperor has taken steps to provide against this?

But at all events question him so as to find out if he has very precise information as to the position and direction of this army. Were it really at Presburg, I fail to understand why it did not come and take part in yesterday's affair; but it is very lucky for us that it did not.'

The Prince departed, and on his return told me that he had submitted my observations, to which the Emperor had replied:

'What would the Archduke do on the rear of my army? He must know that the battle has been lost by his brother.'

'No doubt,' replied the Prince; 'but if he meets with no opposition, nothing need prevent him from harassing you.'

'Well,' replied the Emperor, 'if he dares to do it I will turn and crush him!'

The Prince had not recovered his stupefaction even when he related the answer to me.

Nevertheless, the Emperor thought over what I had said. Shortly afterwards he learned that the Archduke John was making a movement to follow us. We immediately received orders to face about, and the whole Army of Italy went to meet the Austrian Prince, who in his turn retreated as soon as he learned that we had come to fight him and to join General Reynier's force. This General had replaced Marshal Bernadotte, who had been dismissed by the Emperor for publishing a general order, wherein he attributed the victory

of the previous day to his Saxons, although they had vanished from the field and I had taken their place. That had been the object with which I was changing my direction, when the Emperor himself came to me to order it, and made me hasten so much by sending constant messages to be quick; speed was necessary, as I have related. The Emperor, very angry with Bernadotte, issued, to the Marshals only, an order wherein he expressed his displeasure, and said that the praise given by the Commander of the Saxon force belonged to me and to my troops.

As we were approaching the river March, a staff-officer from the Emperor's headquarters brought me a despatch from the Major-General.

'What has happened now?' I asked.

'Upon my word, I don't know. I hear some talk of an armistice, but I do not know the contents of the despatches I have brought you.'

It was indeed the armistice that was officially announced to me, with orders to halt.

'The armistice is signed,' I said to the officer.

'Quite likely,' he replied carelessly and indifferently.

Next morning I received orders to recross the Danube, return into Styria, and take up my headquarters at Gratz.

The results of the battle had been so very scanty that I could not conceive how it was that the Austrians were compelled to beg for an armis-

tice; but I afterwards heard that their army was in such a state of disorganization that it was equivalent to a rout. Neither was it then known that the Emperor only granted the truce because he also needed opportunity to repair his enormous losses, and because we should infallibly have run short of ammunition. Rewards were offered to those who collected the bullets of either army. On our side we had fired close upon 100,000 cannon-shots.

As I passed near Vienna I went into the capital, which I had not been able to visit as I came, and thence to Schönbrunn, the Emperor's headquarters, and hitherto the summer residence of the Emperor of Austria. Napoleon received me somewhat coldly, partly perhaps owing to some remnants of former recollections, and also partly because rumour said, both in the army and in Austria, that it was I who had gained the battle. There were plenty of people ready to repeat this most improper speech to the Emperor —a speech to which I was a stranger, as I only appropriated to myself that which had been really personal, and mine by right. The country and the people at Schönbrunn were alike new to me— I mean the Imperial Court, which greeted me very coldly: I limited myself to returning their courtesy.

However, the Emperor retained me to breakfast, together with Marshal Marmont, who had just arrived; Berthier, the Major-General, was the

third guest. Conversation at first turned upon the battle, and it was then that the Emperor made the remark to me that I have already quoted, respecting the Guards who did not act, and the slowness of Nansouty. Since then he had again visited the battle-field, and gone over the positions that I had successively occupied, deeply regretting the serious losses I had suffered. My squares, outlined by the dead bodies, were still in regular order.

During breakfast a despatch was brought to him from General Vandamme.

'Do you know what he tells me?' he said. 'Look, read for yourself!'

This General, who was in command of the Wurtemburg corps, and was preceding me on the road to Gratz in order to take possession of the town and castle according to the terms of the armistice, announced that on the way he had met the Austrian army from Croatia, led by General Gyulai, on the way to Vienna under orders from the Archduke John. Vandamme added that at a conference a temporary suspension of arms had been agreed upon, each army to retain its position pending fresh orders. We had risen from table, and while I was reading the letter the Emperor called in all the soldiers who had come to pay him their respects. When I returned him the letter he said quickly and aloud:

'Where is your force to-day? Hasten its

march—start in person; I put Vandamme under your orders. Such and such divisions will join you; take entire direction of everything. March against that army and crush it.'

However, while I was taking my leave, he led me aside and whispered to me:

'Be prudent; try not to renew hostilities; we need rest in order to recover ourselves.'

Vandamme, informed of the Emperor's arrangements, received me very coldly, although he had often served under my orders, and instead of thinking how to carry out the fresh ones he had just received, he began to declaim against the Marshals Oudinot and Marmont, who had been given that rank after me. He was quite ready to admit that I had earned it, but as for the others, no name was too bad for them. He was especially violent against the Emperor, who, at the beginning of the campaign, had promised that within three months he would make him a Marshal and Duke.

'He is a coward,' he went on—'a forger, a liar! and had it not been for me, Vandamme, he would still be keeping pigs in Corsica.'

This language was used in presence of thirty military men, most of them generals and superior officers of his own army corps, and Wurtemburgers! When he had cooled down, he told me that an Austrian general officer had come with a message, and was waiting to see me. It was

Robert-Lefèvre pinxit. Rosargues sc.

MARSHAL OUDINOT
DUKE OF REGGIO

Paris for Richard Bentley and Son 1892

Printed by Ch Wittmann Paris

General Zach, chief of General Gyulai's staff. I knew him personally, as he had been made prisoner at the Battle of Marengo, and taken to Paris, where I frequently saw him.

After renewing our acquaintance, I said:

'How comes this? Are we at war while our principal armies have agreed to an armistice?'

He replied that the Archduke, under whom his chief was serving, was independent of his brother, Prince Charles, notwithstanding the latter's title of Generalissimo of the Austrian armies, and that he would not recognise the truce.

'But,' I answered, 'the Emperor of Austria has sanctioned it.'

'I am not aware of it,' was his answer.

I put an end to the conversation, the only object of which clearly was to gain time.

'Monsieur le Général,' I said firmly, 'my orders are imperative to march upon Gratz. I shall move to-morrow morning at five o'clock, and shall attack you if I meet your troops; from that moment the suspension of arms is at an end.'

He calculated that there would not be time enough to communicate my determination to General Gyulai, and to transmit to me that General's answer. He begged for an extension of two hours, to which I agreed, convinced that by then the enemy would have decamped; and this proved to be the case. I had them followed, but after giving strict injunctions that no hostilities

were to be attempted. Our troops soon caught up their rear-guard, and marched it in front of them without striking a blow, and thus we conducted that army into Croatia, while we ourselves went into Styria and Gratz.

The Archduke at length recognised the armistice, and evacuated the fort; his armament was composed of field-guns, which the Emperor ordered me to bring to his headquarters at Schönbrunn. My line of demarcation with the Austrians was the frontier of Hungary, and Croatia as far as Trieste. I perfected the defence of the castle; after arming and provisioning it, I established my camp on the left bank of the Mühr, and my headquarters at the castle of Eckenberg.

Negotiations were carried on during the armistice, and during several months nothing occurred save alternations of peace and fresh outbreaks of hostilities. Peace was concluded at last; it was known as the Peace of Vienna.

On the Emperor's birthday (August 15) I received the 'grand cordon' of the Legion of Honour, the title of Duke of Tarentum, and a present of 60,000 francs (£2,400). Previously to this, Generals Lamarque and Broussier had been promoted to the rank of Grand Officer of the Legion; but this did not prevent the former from carrying on petty intrigues—it seems to have been his element. He displayed more talent in this direction than in military matters,

although he believed himself the best General in the French service, as he modestly remarked to General Pully, who repeated it to me. Shortly afterwards I was able to get rid of him. At the time when I received the three favours that I have mentioned, the Emperor showered a large number upon my *corps d'armée;* but the recipients did not all seem equally satisfied, and some of them were certainly very small. I do not mention those who were dissatisfied at having received nothing.

While the armistice lasted, and even after the peace, fighting continued in the Tyrol against the insurgents in that country whom we had failed to reduce. My entire army corps was sent there, except myself and my staff. I was very grieved to part with such brave troops, and they displayed great sorrow at quitting me for other leaders. General Grenier's corps replaced mine in Styria; that General was only half pleased at having me for a chief, and also complained that he had only received the 'grand cordon' for his wound.

After the ratification of peace, the Emperor returned to Paris, and the Viceroy to Milan; I had command of the Army of Italy. Shortly afterwards I heard of the Emperor's divorce, and rumours were current of a fresh marriage with a Princess of Saxony or Russia. Indeed, negotiations were instituted with the latter Power, but the opposition of the Empress-mother caused them to be suddenly broken off.

The period for the evacuation of Austrian territory had been settled by a convention, but subordinated to the delimitation of the frontiers, to the return of our prisoners, and the payment of the war indemnity. I was on the point of beginning my retrograde movement, when I received counter-orders through two couriers from Paris, who arrived within an hour of each other—one through Austria, the other through Italy. The counter-order was based upon the idea that the Government at Vienna was not fulfilling the three conditions; but they were misinformed in Paris. I had already received the prisoners who were nearest at hand, and Austrian commissioners had long since arrived at Gratz to determine the frontier, which they could not do until the French arrived, and they tarried. As to the indemnity, it was to be paid at Vienna. I sent word of these facts to Paris; at the same time, Marshal Davoust, interim commander of the Grand Army, stated, on his side, that the first payment had been made, and the other conditions performed—if not willingly, at any rate punctually.

This suspension of the evacuation might produce serious consequences, and an evilly-disposed person would have had no difficulty in bringing about a renewal of hostilities. The Austrians were to follow a day's march behind us, consequently they had to stop and put up with very

bad quarters. My correspondence with them on this subject was not friendly. Finally, the orders for departure arrived. The States of Styria came to bid me farewell, and to offer me a present of considerable value for the care I had taken of their country, and the exemplary discipline I had maintained. I refused it, and, as they insisted, I said :

'Well, if you really think you owe me anything, I can tell you how to acquit your debt in a manner more worthy of me. Look after the sick and wounded whom I am obliged to leave here for the time being, as well as the detachment and the medical officers of whom they have charge.'

They promised. The weather was too severe to remove the sick ; humanity forbade it at the risk of exposing the lives of these brave fellows.

The members of the States asked me if I knew anything of a piece of news that had reached Vienna through commercial channels—namely, the sudden arrival of Prince Schwarzenberg, Austrian Ambassador in Paris, to ask the hand of one of the princesses for the Emperor. I replied that I was ignorant of it ; but that such a step, contrary to diplomatic forms and customs, would only increase my doubt. I thought to myself that had there been any truth in it, the Emperor would have been more gallant and less suspicious, and would not have suspended our departure on the grounds I have mentioned ;

that, moreover, he would have sent a French Ambassador to make a request which, in affairs of this kind, is purely a matter of form and ceremony, as everything has been agreed upon beforehand.

'Moreover,' I added to my questioners, 'the matter is of such importance that it could not fail to be well known in Vienna; and, indeed, I am surprised that the "noblesse" of Gratz have not been directly informed, and that a hundred letters, instead of one, have not arrived.'

They replied that the earliest intelligence always came from commercial quarters, and that, doubtless, the next post would bring a confirmation of the story. They begged me to remain until its arrival; but, as my last troops were to leave next morning, I did not like to part from them, and I made these gentlemen promise to send an express to me at Marburg, where I intended to sleep. The express came; but the news was not confirmed, though there was some truth in it, as I shall show later. They had confounded the title of the Ambassador with that of the First Secretary of the Austrian Legation, who had, as a matter of fact, been sent as a courier to Vienna.

I continued my movement of evacuation, and found at Laybach Marshal Marmont, Duke of Ragusa, and at Trieste General Count Louis of Narbonne, Governor of the town. They had

both recently arrived from Paris, and told me that the negotiations for a marriage with a Russian Princess were openly talked about, and seemed certain; they treated my curious news from Gratz as apocryphal.

On returning into the kingdom of Italy, the army that I commanded was broken up. I sent troops into the garrisons assigned to them. I myself received orders to go to Milan, and, on reaching there, found fresh ones summoning me to Paris. The Viceroy was not yet returned; I saw the Vice-Queen, and she took the same view of the marriage-story as the Duke of Ragusa and the Count of Narbonne had done. Her husband's recent letters confirmed her opinion. He said that he was coming home immediately; but my orders were so precise that I could not stay to see him. I received the same confirmation at Turin and Lyons. At last I met the Prince between Cosne and Neuvy, and there he told me that the agreement for the Emperor's marriage had been signed, but with an Austrian, and not a Russian, Princess; it seems that the Empress-Mother had opposed and displayed objections to the marriage of her daughter, who afterwards married the Crown-Prince of the Netherlands, and that thereupon the Emperor had sent for him, Prince Eugene, and had despatched him to the Austrian Ambassador to discover whether he had power to treat; that, on receiving an affirma-

tive answer from the Ambassador, the marriage-contract had been drawn up, the Prince of Neuchâtel sent to Vienna to make the official demand, and that he was on his way to Milan to fetch the Vice-Queen, who, with him, was to assist at the marriage-ceremony which was fixed for April 2. All these arrangements had been very hastily made. I then told the Viceroy the story I had heard in Styria on the eve of my departure, but he could give me no explanation.

When I reached Paris, I found the Court and town ringing with the news of the day; but I was anxious to fathom what I had heard at Gratz. At last, by dint of inquiring, I got the explanation from the Duke of Bassano, and here is word for word what he told me.

The Austrian Ambassador, Prince Schwarzenberg, foreseeing that the negotiations with Russia would very likely fall through, and considering that this alliance would be of great value to his sovereign and country, asked for instructions in case application should be made to him. The answer was affirmative and eager. Monsieur de Florett, First Secretary of the Austrian Legation, carried the Ambassador's despatch, and brought back the plenary powers; his mission became bruited abroad, and thus the first news of it had reached Gratz. Fortified with the necessary authorization, Schwarzenberg, like a clever diplomat, let it be known secretly that he had

plenary powers. The Emperor, who was always hasty, dissatisfied with the answers of Russia, which he regarded as evasive, seized the opportunity, broke with Russia, and treated with Austria.

The Emperor received me with the utmost kindness; he had had very satisfactory accounts of the behaviour and conduct of the troops that I had just taken back into Italy. I fancy also that he had heard something about my refusal to accept the present offered to me at Gratz, and of my recommendation for kind treatment of the sick whom the bad weather had compelled me to leave behind in the town. He made warm inquiries concerning my financial position, said that I ought to have a house in Paris, that he knew I was not rich, that he had adopted me, and would treat me like the other Marshals. Some had been given 1,000,000 francs (£40,000), others 600,000 francs (£24,000), independently of their more or less high endowments. I discreetly waited, and the question was never mooted again. About this time, however, I received a proposal for the hand of your sister in marriage; and the Emperor, hearing of this, and knowing that I could give her but a small portion, promised, of his own accord, a dowry of 200,000 francs (£8,000), which he afterwards converted into an endowment.

CHAPTER II.

Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Catalonia—Blockade and Surrender of Figueras—First Attack of Gout—Preparations for the Russian Campaign—On the Niemen—Murat—Retreat towards Tilsit—General Yorck—Intense Cold—Anxiety and Doubts—Attitude of the Prussians—Defection of the Prussians.

After the Emperor's marriage he appointed me Commander-in-chief of the Army of Catalonia and Governor-General of the Principality.* I had a very strong objection to the manner in which war was carried on in Spain; my objection had its root in the dishonesty—or what in high places is called policy—which caused the invasion of the country; however, the noble and courageous resistance of its inhabitants triumphed over our efforts and our arms. I obeyed, nevertheless, and started. I led a very active life, that was as odious as it was exhausting. The enemy were ubiquitous, and yet I could find them nowhere, though I travelled through the length and breadth of the province. The only result of the cam-

* The appointment is dated April 24, 1810.

paign was the siege and capture of Tortosa by General Suchet, whose operations I protected.*

The next campaign, that of 1811, commenced by a fresh series of marches and provisioning of strongholds. I received orders to lay siege to Tarragona, but I had nothing, neither means nor sufficient force; the Army of Arragon had all. I therefore proposed to the Government that a portion of my troops should be provisionally handed over to General Suchet, so that he should experience no embarrassment, and that there should be unity of command. My plan was approved, and I returned to Barcelona to keep an eye upon everything. I had scarcely arrived there, when I heard that the Spaniards had surprised and taken the castle of Figueras, a place almost impregnable. It was my arsenal; my artillery, ammunition, provisions, regimental baggage, everything was stored there. Want of supervision lost us the place. But the Spaniards had not time to remove as prisoners the garrison they had so strangely surprised. We collected hastily all our scattered detachments, and invested the fortress. I wrote most pressing letters to General Suchet to restore to me the troops I had placed at his disposal, but only one messenger reached him, either at Lerida or Saragossa,

* General Suchet was not made a Marshal until July, 1811.

although the distance from Barcelona was but slight.

This event caused a great sensation everywhere, and increased excitement in the Peninsula, especially in Catalonia, to an enormous pitch; while it also increased their energy, their efforts and their courage. The Spaniards tried to throw reinforcements into the castle and to secure the prisoners, but they were repulsed.

The Emperor ordered that I should be fetched from Barcelona. It was necessary to detach 5,000 or 6,000 men from the blockade to cross the country. At the first receipt of the news I had formed the plan of going to Figueras with an escort of fifty cavalry; but so much pressure was brought to bear upon me, and so much was said to dissuade me from so risky, rash, and dangerous an enterprise, that I yielded and waited for the detachment.

On arriving I found orders to push on the siege vigorously, but my guns and ammunition were all inside. I asked for others, but they could not be supplied. I had therefore to content myself with investing and surrounding the fortress with works, armed with field-guns; not to attack it, but to prevent sorties or assistance. I remembered the famous siege of Alesia,* and I caused analogous works, allowing for the difference of locality, to be made. Each corps was

* Besieged by Cæsar and defended by Vercingetorix.

ordered to cover itself, and I had excited their emulation by my constant presence and my encouragements. I spared myself neither labour nor fatigue. We had already spent two months and a half round the place, which seemed quite decided not to surrender as long as the provisions held out, and there was any hope of succour.

We had now reached July 13; the date is well imprinted on my memory, as I then had my first attack of gout. It lasted a long time, but although horribly severe, my moral nature suffered more than my physical from this paralysis.

I had succeeded in surrounding the place so closely that nothing, not even a cat, could have passed. General Guillot, a prisoner in the place, although he was closely watched, found means to send me information by some Spaniards, whom he had seduced by promises of large rewards. I thus knew the strength of the garrison, the amount of provisions, and could calculate almost to a day when the surrender would be made.

Our troops kept a very sharp look-out, as we expected almost daily to be attacked from outside. The Spaniards made demonstrations, and announced the landing of English troops. More than once, in fact, we had observed a large number of transports at sea. The Spanish Commandant discovering General Guillot's communications, had his messenger shot, and tried and condemned to death the General and several other officers, but

he dared not execute them. I was informed of what was going on, and threatened the Spanish General with reprisals.

Notwithstanding the limitation of the rations, the end was near. Out of regard for such of our prisoners as were sick, but who could be moved, he caused them all to be brought out and laid on the glacis. According to my information, the place could not hold out beyond August 15 or 20. I felt certain that the garrison would try to make a way for themselves through my lines ; all my dispositions were made accordingly. It was the more necessary to redouble our supervision, as we were already weakened by sickness.

I thought that the Spaniards would select August 15, the Emperor's birthday, for their sortie. We kept the day with great rejoicing, having prepared some grand fireworks, of which the crowning-piece was to be a general fusillade directed against the town, with shells and grapeshot!

Nothing stirred during the night, but next morning the fire from the fortress slackened. We observed considerable movement on the ramparts, which was continued the following day. As no messenger appeared, it remained evident that a vigorous sortie was contemplated, and we made ready to give it a warm reception.

It did take place eventually on a dark night, and in the profoundest silence ; but the unevenness of the ground caused the head of the columns to

waver, and made their weapons jingle, and this attracted the attention of our advanced outposts. They hastily fell back upon our lines, and, moreover, without lighting some little piles of sticks, as they had been told to do, in order to throw light upon the scene. It was to be presumed, and it eventually proved, that the Spaniards would attack with swords; a single discharge, showing where they were, would have sufficed to attract all our forces to them. We awaited their approach, and as soon as they opened the attack we threw some hand-grenades amongst them; but the powder was damaged, and only gave out a thick, colourless smoke. I had ordered some Bengal fire from Toulouse, but it only arrived after the place had surrendered.

This attempted sortie was brave, and did honour to the General and his garrison; it was repulsed after several attempts on their part. They did not expect to meet so many obstacles; even the abattis stopped them. From the summit of the ramparts it was easy to misjudge them, they looked like so many little bushes. The Spaniards lost a large number of killed, wounded, and taken prisoners; on our side no one had a scratch.

Next day the enemy ran up the white flag, and sent a *parlementaire* to treat for the surrender. I accorded them the honours of war. The garrison laid down their arms and remained prisoners; out

of respect for their bravery, the officers retained their swords.

I transferred my quarters to the town, where shortly afterwards my attack of gout was followed by one of fever. Being unable to continue to exercise my command, I asked for a successor, who was granted me. I returned to Paris, only able to walk on crutches.

All was then prepared for the famous, albeit disastrous, Russian campaign. Notwithstanding the state of my health, which, however, was improving, I was ordered to start during the month of April, 1812. I had left my armchair in the fortress at Figueras; I left one crutch in Paris and the other in Berlin.

I had command, on the left of the army, of the 10th corps, made up of the Prussian contingent, and of a division formed of three Polish regiments, one Bavarian, and one Westphalian; my staff was French. The King of Prussia* wrote to me begging my attention for his men.

We marched to the Niemen, where we took up our position, and on June 24 the entire army crossed it during the night, without the slightest opposition. The Russians retreated before us; I did not fire a shot till we came into Samogitia.†

* Frederick William III.—*Translator's note.*

† Anciently a province of Poland, now comprised in the Russian Government of Wilna. Keith Johnston's 'Geographical Dictionary.'—*Translator's note.*

My route lay towards the Dwina; I was ordered to garrison the Baltic coasts and to lay siege to Dunaburg and Riga. The former of these fortresses existed only on plans, but it possessed a good *tête-de-pont.*

A reconnaissance made beyond the Dwina, between the two places, caused an alarm upon the right of the river, and determined the Russian generals to set fire to the suburbs of Riga, which might have aided our approach to the citadel, and to evacuate the *tête-de-pont* of Dunaburg, which I occupied.

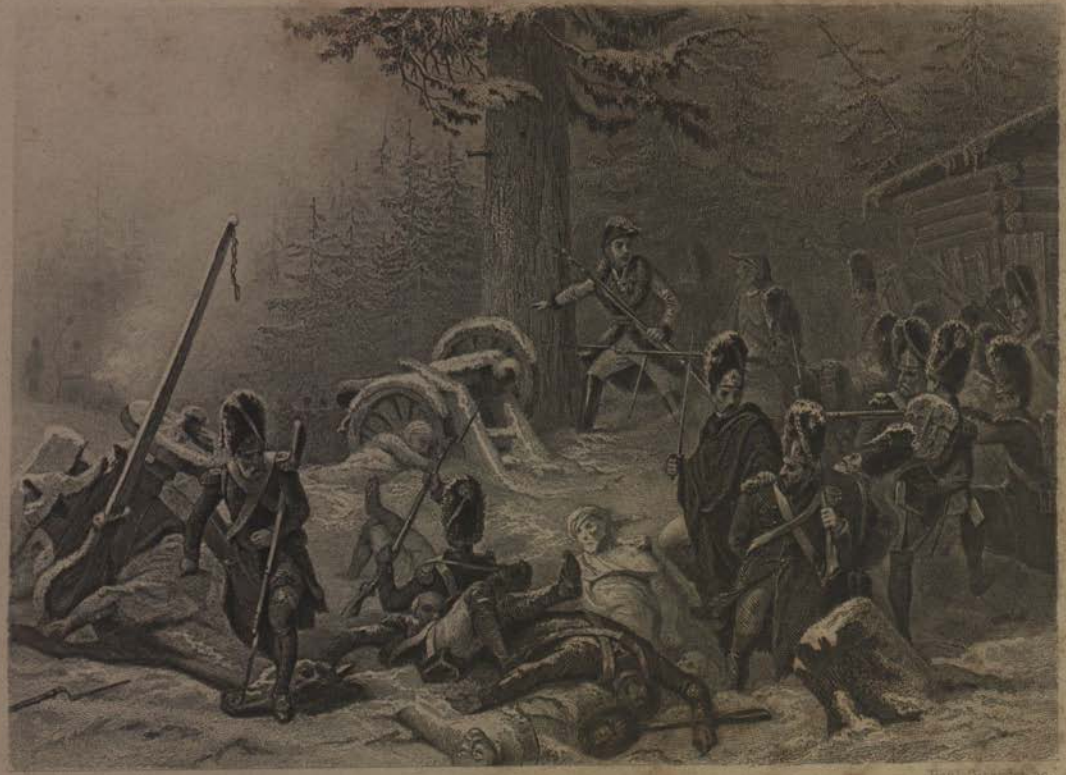
It was then that we discovered that the fortifications of this imaginary town only existed on paper, and not in reality. Here and there a little earth had been turned, but there was not even a hut, consequently no inhabitants, only an old Jesuit church in ruins.

I had orders to recall the siege-artillery from Magdeburg, where it had been recast at enormous expense. Another train had left Dantzic for Riga; it required no less than 40,000 horses to bring it. It was placed at Grafenthal while waiting for the troops and material necessary to convey it across the Dwina, and to invest Riga. I submitted several plans; but as the army was going farther away towards Moscow, I was left in uncertainty and indecision. During the interval a body of 10,000 Russians, coming from Finland, attempted to possess themselves of the

whole siege-train, but it was valiantly defended by the Prussians. I had, in pursuance of orders, taken up my headquarters in a windowless and unfurnished castle not far from Dunaburg, on the extreme right of my line; I hastened up with some troops, but the affair had already terminated to our advantage. From the account I sent in of this incident it was realized that the season was too advanced, and this enormous and valuable material too exposed, and I received orders to send it back to Dantzic.

The evil genius that pushed the army to Moscow had planned out its misfortunes from the very opening of the campaign until it closed with the forced retreat. The Emperor, should he fail to make a passage for himself, had conceived the idea of making for my positions—an illusory idea, which was scarcely more practicable than that of preserving this ill-fated army. I was informed of the daily trials they had to meet with, and although I offered my services, together with those of my inactive, well-fed, and warmly-clad troops, I was left stationary.

I began, however, to draw in my posts, and to concentrate my forces gradually. The enemy, who watched my every movement, fancied that I was preparing to retreat, and attacked me at various points to annoy me; I encouraged and laid a trap for them, into which they fell head foremost. I turned suddenly, attacked them



Karl Girardet del. Paul Girardet sc.

THE RETREAT FROM RUSSIA

Paris for Richard Bentley and Son 1892

Printed by Ch. Wittmann, Paris.

vigorously, and broke their line. They fled, leaving a large number of prisoners in our hands. This affair would have produced much more important results had the Prussian General Yorck obeyed my reiterated orders to proceed rapidly from Mittau in the direction of Riga, in the rear of the Russians, as soon as I had broken their line. I had already observed in his letters a marked increase of coldness on the part of this General, which increased with the misfortunes of the Grand Army; but I was far from suspecting the catastrophe that occurred shortly afterwards.

The Emperor, having forced the passage of the Beresina, and opened communications with Wilna, started incognito for Paris, leaving the command to Murat, King of Naples. This was an additional misfortune, for this General, of the most distinguished bravery, was really only fit to lead a cavalry-charge, or to harass the enemy by his activity. He hoped to be able to rest and reorganize the débris of the army at Wilna, but the Russians dislodged him four-and-twenty hours after his arrival. The last remains of that immense army perished there.

On quitting Wilna, Murat at last ordered me to fall back upon Tilsit. This order was dated December 10. It was confided to a Prussian Major, who, instead of coming direct to me as he might have done in thirty hours, followed the highroad from Königsberg to Tilsit, Memel,

and Mittau; he was thus nine days in reaching me. I received it during the day of the 18th, and as I had foreseen everything, and made all my preparations beforehand, all my columns moved the next day, December 19. I was already aware that the enemy's scouts were crossing Samogitia behind me. I fully expected to meet with every sort of obstacle, and resolved to overcome them all. The most serious matter was not the enemy, but the river Niemen. The bridge had been removed on account of the ice, and if the thaw began all my efforts would be vain.

I threw out parties on every side, so as to mislead the enemy as to my real destination. At a given point I sent off my advance-guard towards Taurogen; I led the centre by another route, and General Yorck had command of the rear-guard, and replaced me daily in my bivouacs.

We had to push forward, and the troops had but very few hours' rest out of the twenty-four; but to counterbalance that they were well clad, and did not want for provisions, in consequence of the precautions I had taken in July to establish depots everywhere. My experiences of the winter campaigns of 1794-95 in Holland, and more especially of that of 1800 in the Grisons, and when crossing the Alps, had made me requisition 30,000 sheepskin pelisses from the Polish and Russian peasants, giving them in exchange the skins of the sheep consumed by my troops. This

wise precaution saved them from hunger and cold, which was so severe that, during a portion of my march, the thermometer went down to 27 or 28 degrees Réaumur. I lost only a few men, who, in spite of the penalty of death with which I had threatened both sellers and consumers of spirits, got drunk and perished, removed by the cold into eternal sleep.

The enemy had posted troops on either side of the Niemen to dispute my passage. They were vigorously attacked by the Generals of my advance-guard, Grandjean and Bachelu, who did well in not waiting for me. I had made a detour in order to flank and turn the enemy. The affair had terminated, after great slaughter, to the glory of the two Generals by the time I came up; they had made some thousands of prisoners, and taken several pieces of cannon.

I established myself at Tilsit, and opened communications with Königsberg. I informed General Yorck of the happy issue, and desired him to hasten his march; we had opened the way, and he might arrive the following day. The weather was milder, and the thaw had begun. My troops had a day's rest, of which they stood in some need. My intention was to continue the retreat as soon as my rear-guard joined me; but I waited in vain. I knew that the enemy, by forced marches, were crossing the Niemen above my position, and that their principal body were

following the course of the Pregel in my rear. I was therefore exposed to be cut off a second time on the road to Königsberg.

I sent in all directions after General Yorck. Two days previously he ought to have arrived at Taurogen to support my advance-guard, which had quitted it in the morning; they had no news of him. At that time this General was preparing an act of treachery unparalleled in history.

Four days had already passed in uneasiness, impatience, and, I may almost say, anguish. The news brought in by my emissaries—the Prussian officers—was so uniform that it could only have been concerted; they had neither seen nor heard of General Yorck. I tried to keep back my suspicions, to crush them; I thought that a feeling of honour ought to prevent their existence; some obstacle, sudden panic, might have determined the General to retrace his steps, and to make for Memel with a view to re-entering Prussia—a direction that I meant to take myself if I failed to open a passage across the Niemen. The thaw might at any moment destroy the ice; the enemy were reinforcing themselves, manœuvring, gaining upon me, and approaching the only communication that, to tell the truth, I was still keeping.

Had I been less confident in other people's honour, the attitude of the Prussians would have opened my eyes to what was going on around me. Far from being uneasy at the fate of the rear-

guard, they seemed not to trouble about it, especially since the arrival of an officer of their nation, who had come post-haste from Berlin. He was, I believe, a Count von Brandenburg, a natural brother of the King. When they were in my presence they appeared to share my uneasiness. Various signs, and the opinion of my Generals, coincided with my suspicions. I argued in this manner, which seemed to me common-sense, and to admit of no reply:

'If they have orders, or if they take upon themselves to abandon our cause, what hinders or prevents them? They are our principal force—17,000 or 18,000 men against 4,000 or 5,000; and, moreover, can I count upon the two Bavarian and Westphalian regiments forming a division with three Polish regiments? As to the latter, no doubt can exist about their fidelity; I was wrong to have conceived any about the others.'

I added:

'They will explain to us that the misfortunes threatening their country compel them to separate themselves from us; but they will not drive their cowardice to the extremity of giving us up. They would ask nothing better than to see us leave here, so that they might charge us with having abandoned the rear-guard,' as I was frequently begged to do.

I heard many stories, too, which were proofs of ill-will, and even of insubordination and disobedience.

I ended by declaring positively that until the end, which could not be long delayed, I would remain firm in my resolution; that my life and career should never have to bear upon them the blot of having abandoned, on account of fears which were perhaps imaginary, the troops committed to my care; and that, under any circumstances, I was determined to risk everything, even to recross the Niemen to go in search of the rear-guard, rather than voluntarily separate myself from them by quitting the banks of the river.

On the last day of the year 1812, the enemy made demonstrations all round me. During the night I feared an attack on the town of Tilsit, which was open on all sides. I ordered the troops to close up round all the roads, to send out patrols and reconnoitring parties, to keep a good look-out, to barricade themselves well, and, finally, to be ready to take up arms at the first signal.

The weather was very bad. The troops commanded by General Bachelu, who was detached, refused to obey and to march; his decision carried the day; they formed up, but their disposition was far from reassuring. A Prussian battalion was on duty at headquarters.

'They will carry you off!' someone said to me. 'Let us go!'

'No,' I replied; 'I prefer to risk it.'

Between eleven o'clock and midnight, the com-

mander of this battalion came and told me that he had received orders from General Massenbach, his chief, to get under arms.

'That must be a mistake,' I said; 'I only gave orders that the troops should be ready in case of an alarm. Go and tell that to your General, and say, further, that I do not wish to fatigue or wet the men unnecessarily.'

He came back no more; probably he had been let into the secret.

Although they were on their own territory, the Prussians applied to me for money to satisfy their wants. I had no authority to dispose of the contributions levied in Courland; however, as they had power to take what I would have refused them, I caused a distribution of about half, or perhaps a third, of the sum demanded, leaving it to the Governments concerned to arrange about repayment.

The Prussians informed me with some haughtiness that they had a right to a share of the contributions; there was nothing for it but to put a good face on the matter and dissimulate. The same Commander of the headquarters battalion came and told me that the money given for his troop was insufficient; that they were in want of shoes; that he had just discovered some hundreds of pairs in a shop, but that they would not let him have them on credit. He asked for 1,500 or 2,000 francs (£80) more.

'You are too late,' I answered; 'the treasury is shut.'

However, as he insisted, I gave him the money out of my own pocket, and have never seen it since.

In great uneasiness about the thaw, I had the ice sounded night and morning. While, wrapped in my cloak, I was trying to get the sleep that had avoided me for four nights, Marion, Colonel of Engineers, came to me at dawn, and said:

'I congratulate you, Monsieur le Maréchal, you have at last received news of General Yorck.'

'No,' I replied quickly.

'I fancied you had; for as, in accordance with your orders, I was testing the ice, I saw all the Prussians rapidly recrossing the Niemen. I thought you had sent them to meet the rear-guard. General Massenbach, as he passed by me, gave me these two letters for you.'

'Heavens!' I exclaimed; 'we are betrayed—perhaps given up; but we will sell our lives dearly.'

I hastily glanced at the letters, caused the assembly to be sounded immediately, gathered our faithful Poles, Bavarians, and Westphalians at the back of the town, and commenced a forced march in order to gain the Forest of Bömwald, a sort of defile. I harangued the troops, not concealing our difficulties, and promised them a

month's extra pay if, as I trusted we should, we succeeded in reaching Dantzic in safety.

The Prussians had displayed such haste in their desertion, that they had omitted to warn the detachment that acted as my escort. The officer commanding them came to me shortly after my orders had been issued, and, from his calm appearance and manner, it was easy to see that he suspected nothing of what had happened. He could not speak French, but I caused an account of what had passed to be related to him; he turned pale, and shed tears of indignation. He wished to remain with and follow us. I told him to call his men to horse; thanked his detachment for their zeal, fidelity, and attachment; gave them 600 francs from my own pocket, and the same to the officer for a horse; and, despite their entreaties, sent them to join their compatriots.

CHAPTER III.

Alarm at Naples—A Trap—A Terrible March—Russian Untrustworthiness—Alarm of the King of Naples—Plan of Action—Arrival at Dantzic—Summons to Paris—Reception by the Emperor.

WHILE our weak body of foreigners was assembling, the authorities of Tilsit, frightened and alarmed for the safety of their town, came to implore me to preserve it. They thought we were going to set alight to it out of revenge for the defection. I sent them back reassured, and we started in good order. The enemy's scouts pursued us; I had no cavalry now to keep them at a distance, and they were not worth powder and shot. Two *parlementaires*—one Russian and the other Prussian—were brought, by mistake, to me in the midst of my column. The latter summoned me insolently to lay down my arms; I treated him with scorn, and dismissed him. I did not know until after the former had left me that he was a Frenchman, formerly aide-de-camp to General Moreau, and by name Rapatel. I did not recognise him; but, more prudent than his comrade, he asked me to come to an arrange-

ment with his General, Prince Repnine, who proposed a suspension of arms until the peace, which he said was imminent, was concluded, and to give him an interview in the meantime. The trap was too clumsily set to catch me. I told him that a suspension of arms could be brought about without a convention; that he could easily see that I was only marching in order to retire, and that they could very well stop following if they thought fit to do so; that, as to the interview, as I had no reason for refusing it, I would meet his Prince at a certain spot at a given hour the next day, but that after that hour he need not trouble himself. He left, and I continued my march towards the forest.

We marched for twenty-two hours in rain, through water, and in pitchy darkness; many of my men fell out, wearied, but rejoined us next day. At length, at six in the morning, we reached this dense forest. I had caused the entrance to it to be guarded by troops, who, before and while I was waiting at Tilsit for the rear-guard, had escorted our baggage to Labiau.

The aide-de-camp who had accompanied the *parlementaire*, and who was to bring back the answer to my proposal, had not returned. The hour fixed for the interview struck; no sign of Prince Repnine. However, we thought we saw him riding up; but it was only an officer commissioned to apologize for the unpunctuality of his General.

The Prince, who had chanced to be away when my aide-de-camp came, asked for a delay of an hour or two.

'I understand,' I answered, 'that the Prince may have business to see to; but so have I. Present my compliments to him, and express to him my regrets at missing this opportunity of making his personal acquaintance; he will esteem me the more for it. His ruse is too simple.' I added: 'Does he really suppose that I am to be taken in by such groundless, not to say absurd, insinuations? Return, and send me back my aide-de-camp.'

As he wished to protest that his General was acting in good faith, I made him remount his horse. Scarcely had he gone a few yards, when the cannon became audible. I called him back, and said:

'What is the meaning of that? Is it thus that your General exhibits his honesty? You deserve that I should retain you as a hostage, but I will give your Prince a lesson in loyalty. Return to him, and say that henceforward any interviews between him and me must be carried on by cannon-balls.'

The firing ceased at the outposts; our Commandant told me that he was under arms, when the enemy, meaning to drive him back, charged him. He had received and repulsed them with bayonets, and they had retired. My aide-de-camp, who was with the Prince, begged to be

sent back, observing that he was horribly afraid of French bullets.

'Go,' replied the Prince. 'I have ordered the firing to cease, and my troops to retire. I meant to surprise your General, but he has been sharper than I.'

We reached Labiau, where I found orders to go straight to Königsberg, to confer with the King of Naples.

I left the command to General Grandjean, who had General Bachelu under him; during my absence they had a very sharp skirmish at Labiau. On the road I met counter-orders. The King, compelled, he said, to go to Elbing, and being unable to see me, begged me to send him a plan of operations, and my opinion upon what we ought to do in our present position. I had no hesitation in recommending what I should have ordered myself had I been Commander-in-chief—the evacuation of all places in Poland, the kingdom of Prussia, and on the Vistula, to concentrate upon the Oder with the troops arriving from Italy, and to await the fresh levies that were being made in France. My division came up with me, and I took under my direction that of General Heudelet, composed of freshly-joined conscripts.

We reached Königsberg, where I found Marshal Ney alone. He had committed the mistake of evacuating the town at the first manifestation of an insurrection, which might have broken out at

sight of the enemy, who were close behind us. I suggested to the Marshal to come away from it immediately with me; some hours later he required all his courage to carry him through several threatening groups. I had returned to my troops, occupied partly in keeping off the enemy, and partly in obtaining provisions, and it was to them that Marshal Ney owed his safety.

At nightfall I continued my retreat towards Elbing. The King of Naples sent me orders not only to stop, but to return to Königsberg. I caused representations to be made to him concerning the obstacles in the way, warning him that the enemy had already advanced by another road upon Preussich-Eylau, and that he himself would be immediately surrounded, or that his communications would be cut off. He reiterated his orders, adding that I was misinformed, that he had numerous spies about the country, and that the enemy could not move a step without his being informed of it. Judging better than he, I took no notice of his orders, and continued my retrograde movement, which made the King furious. He soon changed his tone, however. The advance of the enemy upon his right flank and rear being confirmed, he applauded my foresight, and summoned me post-haste to Elbing to confer with him. I had kept along the Passarge as far as I could consistently with prudence.

I arrived during the morning, and found the King ready to mount his horse, and very impatient to get away. I pointed out to him that, as my troops could not arrive before the evening, his sudden withdrawal would be the signal for an insurrection, and for the pillaging of the magazines, the preservation of which was so necessary to my men. My representations were in vain, and his resolution was strengthened by the noise of cannon from my rear-guard, who were fighting as they retreated. He desired me to remain a few days at Elbing, and then to throw myself immediately into Dantzic, of which I was to take the command. I showed him the impossibility of holding Elbing with so few troops, that we were almost outflanked as it was, and that even next morning it would be too late to leave it. As to remaining in Dantzic, I observed that there was already a fully-commissioned Governor in the town,* and that he would quite rightly refuse to yield his command to me. Thereupon he told me to send all my troops thither, and to go myself to his headquarters, the position of which was as yet undecided. I asked him if he had not carried out at least a portion of the plan I had submitted to him.

'No,' he replied; 'I have forwarded it to the Emperor, whose orders I shall receive in three days at latest.'

* General Rapp.

'What!' I exclaimed, 'you have forwarded it? It was sent to you in confidence. The Emperor, who probably is in complete ignorance as to all that has taken place, and is still occurring, will be furious, and rightly, too, if this plan has not been developed.'

'I limited myself to asking for his orders,' he answered coldly.

'And where shall we be in three days?' I added.

The Emperor ought to have been on the spot, and even then I should have doubted his determination, and yet the adoption of my plan was the only reasonable course. These garrisons, which were thus to be left to themselves, without appearance, and, I may add, without hope of speedy help, were bound, with the exception of Dantzic, to fall for want of provisions, and by their own weakness. It was already too late for Pillau and the places in Poland, but not for Dantzic.

The Prussian Government appeared to ostensibly disavow the defection of its troops; I would have entrusted to it the care of this place, not because I had any faith in its honour, but in order to occupy a portion of its forces, which would have diminished the number of our enemies, by giving it an interest in keeping this important place from the greed of Russia. I demonstrated that by this means we could unite on the Oder

all our fighting troops; that is to say, about 60,000 or 70,000 men. The Russians had also suffered severely. The Prussians would need time for organization, and by taking up that position we should hold in check the greater portion of that monarchy. We could thus await in safety the levy of 300,000 men that was being made in France.

Nothing could be urged against this reasoning, and the King therefore did not attempt any answer. He was entirely occupied with his retreat, and his return to Naples, which he effected immediately, without any notification to the Emperor. He made over his command to Prince Eugene; it was a pity, both for it and for himself, that the Emperor did not give it to the Prince in the first place when he left the army.

Knowing the indifference of the King, of which he had just given me fresh proof in sending to Paris the plan I had prepared for him in confidence, and in announcing that he would within three days receive orders which he would not be able to execute even in part, I required of him, before we separated, that he should give me written instructions. He at first made difficulties, which proved his impatience to start, but at length gave way, and they were taken down by Count Daru, who was present at the interview. He then mounted his horse, and started amid the yells of the populace, which were called forth

rather by his extraordinary costume than by his person. Orders had been given to all the troops in Elbing to follow him, but I retained a regiment of infantry to protect the magazines until the arrival of my own men; this, however, did not prevent a large portion of them being pillaged. I gave my soldiers some hours' rest that night, and then we continued our retreat. We had great difficulty in crossing the Vistula on the ice, and in scaling the steep declivities of the left bank. The courage of my troops redoubled as we neared Dantzic, which was regarded as the goal of salvation, and the end of fatigues, privations, and sufferings.

Since leaving Courland we had fought every day and marched every night. This had weakened us, but we were now within a few days' march of our long-desired haven. After the passage of the Vistula, a proposal was made to me to lay an ambuscade for the enemy. It succeeded perfectly, and at length we took up our position around Dantzic.

I immediately resigned the command of my troops to General Rapp, the Governor. I was grieved at parting from them. Generals, commissioned and non-commissioned officers, and privates, although they were all foreigners (with the exception of my staff), and only our allies, had rivalled each other in their zeal, devotion, courage, and efforts, during the long, painful, and danger-

ous retreat we made during that disastrous winter from the banks of the Dwina, with no rest save our forced halt at Tilsit. I received from all thanks for having saved them from the perils which daily environed us; their sorrow at our parting was not less than my own. I faithfully kept the promise I had made. Officers and men received a present of a month's pay, the superior officers and generals in proportion. The small French division did not share in it, as it had only been under my orders for a very short time—since Königsberg; but, in justice to it, I am bound to say that it behaved very well, although formed of conscripts.

Next morning the enemy attacked part of the line. General Rapp had invited all the generals to a farewell breakfast, and we were then at table. Each one hurried to his post; and that evening I started, not knowing where the principal head-quarters were established.

I took the road to Berlin; there I learned that they were at Posen. I asked for orders, and did not have to wait long for the answer. I was ordered to Paris to assist in the reorganization of some new army corps. The day before my departure, I was robbed at the inn of the sum of 12,000 francs (£480), destined for the expenses of my journey. My carriages had rejoined me; I sent them into Westphalia, near Cassel, to rest my horses during my absence. I felt real sorrow

on learning that two very pretty Russian guns, of small calibre, that my troops had taken by assault from a little fortified castle on the Dwina, and which they had presented to me, had been left, by the carelessness of one of my aides-de-camp, at Dantzic, in one of my baggage-waggons that needed some repairs. I had intended them to decorate Courcelles!

I reached Paris without adventure. I had very small reason to be satisfied with the Emperor's reception of me. He started on seeing me, and said not a word. No doubt he felt resentment against me because of my proposal to abandon all that we held beyond the Oder. He had also been deceived by untruthful accounts of my treatment of the Prussian troops, which was said to have contributed to their defection; however, to convince himself of the contrary, he had only to read the letters of Generals Yorck and Massenbach. I left his presence indignant that all my efforts and devotion should have met with so bad a reward, and went no more to Court.

A few days later, however, I was recalled. News had just arrived that not only did the King of Prussia approve the conduct of his troops, but that he had allied himself with Russia, and that all his subjects were taking up arms against us. Then the Emperor acknowledged to me that he had been misled concerning me and the disingenuous

policy of Prussia; that I had acted wisely; that he had been incorrectly informed as to the last disasters of Wilna and Kowno. He said that our misfortunes were great, but not irreparable; that he and I had begun the war at the same time, and must finish it together; that it would be the last campaign we should undertake, and that I must get ready for it. He added that he put implicit trust in his father-in-law, the Emperor of Austria.

'Beware!' I answered. 'Do not trust the clever policy of that Cabinet.'

The auxiliary Austrian force had acted very feebly during our disastrous campaign. With a little determination, or without secret orders not to risk his troops, Prince Schwarzenberg, who commanded them, and who unfortunately had under him General Reynier with the Saxon contingent, might have held in check Tchitchakof's army, and prevented it from harassing our rear at the Beresina.

CHAPTER IV.

The Grand Army—Battle of Lutzen—Occupation of Dresden—Battle of Bautzen—A Futile Congress—Passage of the Bober—Surrender of Vandamme—Skirmish at Goldberg—Battle of the Katzbach—Disorderly Retreat—General Sebastiani—Serious Preparations.

In the month of August, 1813, I started for Saxony to take up the command of the 11th corps of the Grand Army.* The day following my arrival at the Emperor's headquarters, I had orders to attack Merseburg, which I carried, or rather forced, after a long resistance; as I knew that the place was defended by Prussian troops who had served under my orders during the preceding campaign, and that they were commanded by the same General, my onslaught was the more vigorous.

We marched upon Lutzen and Leipsic. I was in position between these two points; the allies in front of us on the left bank of the Elster. The name of that river, which a few months later was nearly fatal to me, has remained engraven on my

* Macdonald's nomination as Commander-in-chief of the 11th corps was dated April 10, 1813.

memory. The Emperor, believing that all the enemy's forces were collected at Leipsic, sent thither General Lauriston, who commanded the left. He came up to me, and gave me orders to support him if necessary; but at that moment he received intelligence that the allies, who had debouched from Pegau, were advancing towards us. The Emperor would not believe it, because he was obstinately convinced that their forces were at Leipsic. Marshal Ney, who was with him, strengthened him in that idea, and declared he had noticed nothing on the Elster.

However, firing began, and was directed against the very point occupied by the Marshal's corps; it increased in violence, and approached rapidly; then the Emperor despatched the Marshal, and shortly afterwards followed him.* Warnings came in apace; but, notwithstanding them, the Emperor left Lauriston in difficulties near Leipsic, and me in position to support or protect him; but scarcely had he reached the central position, when he changed my destination, and ordered me to march straight ahead towards the Elster. I had not started, when a second order came, telling me to go more to the right; but, as the enemy continued to advance, a third order directed me to march straight on to their guns.

We went at the double, and it was full time, for the enemy's cavalry had already slipped in

* Battle of Lutzen, May 2, 1813.

between me and Marshal Ney, who had lost much ground. The enemy, having realized my movement, turned to retreat; but I had had time to point thirty pieces of cannon, and they galloped rapidly through my grapeshot. We continued to advance on their right flank, and forced them into a position covered by a little artificial canal used for floating wood. After crossing—not without loss—a little valley, we crowned the heights; the plain lay outstretched before us, but without cavalry it would have been unsafe to venture there. Suddenly the fire ceased all along the front of the army, and was directed at us; the enemy sent forward their cavalry reserves, composed of the Guards of the sovereigns of Russia and Prussia. Thrice they attempted to break our squares, but in vain; each time they were driven back with loss, and the third time in such confusion as must have given great advantage to our cavalry had we possessed any. Only a few squadrons covered our left, commanded by the Marquis de Latour-Maubourg, who wished nothing better than to charge. I sent to beg him to do so; but the Viceroy, under whose orders he was acting, refused, in spite of my entreaties, as he did not wish to risk the little body of brave men who were our only resource. The battle was gained by the infantry and the artillery. It took the name of Lutzen.

The battle-field, our front especially, was

Raul Girardet del. Outhwaite sc.

NAPOLEON ON THE BANKS OF THE ELBE

Paris for Richard Bentley and Son 1897

Printed by W. Wiltsgate Paris

strewn with dead and wounded, whom, for want of means, we had been unable to move. Early next morning the Emperor paid us a visit. He was very pleased. He praised us for our energy of the previous day, and for the vigour of our attack, which had stopped the victorious march of the enemy, and turned the scale in our favour. During the day, after we had crossed the Elster, which the enemy did not defend, the Emperor made to my army corps a large distribution of rewards, promotions, decorations, pensions, titles, majorities, etc. My reward was the command of the advance guard.

The enemy did not remain at Dresden; they blew up the bridge, and only defended the Elbe long enough to protect their retreat by the right bank. While means for rebuilding or mending the bridge were being sought, my infantry got across the breaches by means of ladders; as soon as it was sufficiently repaired, the artillery crossed. The Emperor, who had taken upon himself the functions of baggage-master, stopped all vehicles; but I obtained an exemption for some of those belonging to my corps, and that evening took up my position on the heights above Dresden.

Next day I followed the traces of the enemy; we had no affair of importance till Bautzen. I thought that I was being followed by the army; but it had been allowed to rest, and I found myself isolated in presence of that of the enemy.

In order to impose upon them, I spread out my troops like a spider's web, and waited the arrival of the other corps. Successive warnings made them hasten their advance. One step backward on my part would have exposed us to certain loss; I therefore preferred to run the risk of staying where I was, pretending to advance, and lighting at night fires scattered among the different lines, so as to make believe that the whole army was present.

I thus passed several days; at length our supports came up. We attacked at Bautzen, crossed the Spree, and I took a considerable share in the Battle of Wurschen, which brought us into Silesia, after two sharp skirmishes at Bischofswerda, and before reaching Löwenberg. The former of these towns caught fire during the skirmish; I believe the fire was the act of marauders after we had occupied it. An armistice was concluded during the action at Jauer, and after the occupation of Breslau. We went into cantonments; I took the district of Löwenberg for my army corps.

We had done enough to retrieve the honour of our arms after the terrible misfortunes of the preceding campaign. France and the army earnestly longed for peace.

A Congress met at Prague, but it was clear that none of the Powers were acting in good faith. Austria was the soul of the Congress; she had in

reality remained neutral since the reopening of hostilities, but, as afterwards transpired, she had bound herself by treaty with Russia and Prussia as early as the previous February. Proof positive of this was given by the manner in which the enemy retired before the armistice; they grouped themselves at the foot of the mountains of Bohemia, instead of recrossing the Oder. Driven into the position they had taken up, they could have no choice but to lay down their arms, supposing always that Austria meant to make her pretended neutrality respected; that was obvious.

The negotiations fell through, and hostilities recommenced, the allies being reinforced by the Austrians, and soon afterwards by the defection of the Bavarians. Before the truce was broken off, I had orders to reconnoitre all the outlets from Bohemia, from the Saxon frontier as far as the Bober, which was the line of demarcation on my front, while my right extended to the mountains. At the same time the allies entered Bohemia. They moved thither their principal forces, and attacked me two or three days before the expiration of the armistice. They expected to take me unawares, but I was ready for them, as, instead of cantoning my troops, I had formed camps sufficiently near each other to be able to unite promptly.

The day after my return to Löwenberg I re-

ceived news that the enemy were attacking. I went half-way to the point indicated, but could neither see nor hear anything. The enemy's movements were concealed by hillocks and other obstructions on the ground. As I received no further news, I concluded that the post attacked had been forced, and that the detachment which defended it had been unable to fall back upon Löwenberg according to their instructions. In order to clear up this doubt, and while my breakfast was preparing, I took a picket of cavalry and went out slowly and carefully to the point whence news had reached me that the enemy were advancing. On reaching it I found all quiet, and learned that the enemy had advanced, but had immediately retired again. Information had been sent to me by an orderly; I never received it, as the man must have lost his way or got drunk.

I had ridden three leagues out to this point, and as many from Löwenberg, in my first reconnaissance; our horses needed rest as much as we did ourselves. I accepted a meagre breakfast heartily offered.

Just as I was remounting my horse to return, an officer galloped up as fast as he could ride, to tell me that the enemy had crossed the Bober at the very point I had quitted, that the attack had been so sudden that there had not been time to harness my carriages, which were

probably taken; he was not certain about this, because, as soon as the enemy appeared, he had hastened away in search of me. I concluded that it could only be a simple reconnaissance, and decided to return; but ere I had ridden half a league, fresh information and fugitives confirmed what I had first heard. I was thus cut off from the principal point and from almost all my forces. I waited a few hours more for the return of the scouts whom I had sent out; their reports all tallied. At last I decided to make a great detour and bring in my outposts; we marched all the rest of the day and through the night, and reached Löwenberg worn out with fatigue. There I learned what had occurred. Lauriston's corps, which had joined me the previous day, had attached itself to my troops, and together they had driven the enemy back across the Bober. They had had some losses, and my carriages were gone.

In consequence of the account of this event that I sent to the Emperor, he hastened up with some reserves and the Guard. We had taken some prisoners, and learned that the principal attack of the allies was to be made on the left bank of the Elbe. The Emperor, nevertheless, thought that he would still have time to force the passage of the Bober; we did achieve it, took Bautzen, and pushed on as far as Goldberg.

The Emperor returned to Dresden. On his

way he heard that the Emperors of Austria and Russia had debouched from Bohemia, and were marching upon that town. As he descended the mountain overlooking it, he could see the position of the allies. He was just in time; beat and forced them to retire, but unfortunately they were not pursued with sufficient rapidity. He only sent Vandamme with his corps against them, and he, believing himself supported, pushed on boldly and entered the defile of Töplitz. As one of the enemy's corps had become cut off, the allies returned and attacked Vandamme, who was soon attacked also from behind by this same corps, which was only seeking a way out. Thus taken between two fires, in this sort of funnel, Vandamme surrendered, was made prisoner, and nearly all his troops with him.* The Emperor, it was said, was unwell, and had returned to Dresden with his reserves and his Guard while this disastrous event was in progress. As usual, Vandamme got all the blame, but this time he had only been guilty of an excess of zeal.

After the Emperor had quitted me and returned to Dresden to fight the allies, as I have related, he sent for me; and after telling me that he had need of Marshal Ney, put under my orders Ney's own army corps, together with that of Lauriston

* Battle of Kulm, August 30, 1813. The Battle of Dresden, won by the Emperor, had been fought three days previously, on August 27.

and General Sebastiani's cavalry. Ney and Sebastiani were carrying on operations in the neighbourhood of Leignitz, and, I know not through what misunderstanding, had retreated. The Emperor spoke to me of the immediate necessity of a diversion, and told me that it was with this object that he was uniting these four army corps, including my own, under my orders. He instructed me to advance rapidly with them and threaten Breslau and the outlets of Bohemia into Silesia.

I immediately returned to my corps, and we started without delay. We met some cavalry near Goldberg, and a brush that ensued was disadvantageous to us; notwithstanding the efforts of Generals Reiset and Audenarde, my horse gave way. I hastened to rally them, and put myself at their head to lead a charge. I started them, and believed myself followed, when the enemy's cavalry came to meet me; as I knew that my men had retreated, I could do nothing but retreat too. My infantry debouched and passed through a deep ravine. General Meunier was beginning to form a square, which at that moment bore a striking resemblance in shape to an egg. Seeing me pursued and hard pressed, he proposed that I should join him; I refused, and passed near him. The enemy did not expose themselves to his fire; they were only in that place to cover their retreat. We followed them eagerly, but

were obliged to draw rein to give General Souham, who was commanding Ney's corps, and General Sebastiani time to join us.

The former received orders to leave the point where he was and make for Jauer, and to turn the enemy's right, while I made a front attack upon them at the Katzbach; General Lauriston commanded my right.* General Sebastiani arrived, pushing before him a strong detachment of cavalry, that had placed itself between two fires. It escaped us, however, by a rapid flank movement. It had been raining since the previous day. From the heights whence the enemy retired we thought we could distinguish the leading columns of General Souham's army; I ordered some squadrons and light artillery to make a reconnaissance, and meanwhile I went myself to the right of my line at some distance away, and told Lauriston to send some light troops across the Katzbach to test the strength of the enemy upon his left. These orders were all clearly given, and yet not one of them was properly carried out. General Souham, for instance, who had received his early in the day, failed to execute the movement intended to turn the enemy's right. He threw himself upon Sebastiani's cavalry, which were still advancing to the heights, although I had simply ordered a few squadrons for recon-

* Battle of the Katzbach, August 26, 1813, against the Army of Silesia, under the command of Blücher.

noitring purposes. It was on returning from my right that I learned and saw these counter-movements. The enemy, whose centre was rapidly retreating, but who were not uneasy for their right, retired, and I saw their artillery coming into position.

Among other movements, the great fault was committed on our side of taking a quantity of guns to the heights. The ground was already soaked, and they could only be moved with extreme difficulty. I ordered most of them to come down, but the road was encumbered with other guns, and with the cavalry who were going up. I instantly foresaw what would happen, and, as a precautionary measure, sent forward a division of infantry to protect the two bodies on the plateau. The rain continued; the men could not use their muskets. I went down in person and freed the base of the hill. The road was not more than twelve or fifteen feet wide; it was impossible to turn, the only thing to be done was to let all those who had started gain the summit, turn there, and come down again; and that took time. While we were in these difficulties, the enemy deployed a large body of cavalry, protected by the artillery, and the infantry followed in columns. I had no news of General Souham, I did not even know if he had received my orders; the movements of the enemy were proof positive that if he had received them, he had done nothing towards

putting them into execution. Without his corps I could do nothing, much less give battle, although the enemy were already calling this affair by that name. Meanwhile, Lauriston, yielding a little on his left, crossed the river with a portion of his troops, and made a charge with all his cavalry.

In the centre our guns, sunk in the mire up to the axles, could not be moved; the artillery soldiers and gunners unharnessed them, and brought back the horses; the enemy dared not descend. I have already said that the infantry could make no use of their weapons; posted on the slope of the hill, they were safe from the attacks of the cavalry. Then the front column of Souham's corps came up to make bad worse, and to still further encumber General Sebastiani's position. The latter was in despair at the loss of his guns. Souham stammered out some reasons why he had failed to operate upon the points I had indicated.

It was getting late; the rain fell unceasingly, the ground was soaked, the ravines were filling, the streams overflowing; in such a state of affairs I ordered a retreat to Goldberg. A night march under such circumstances occasioned great disorder; the rain never ceased. Lauriston was anxious to take the road by which he had crossed the mountains. I remarked that it would most likely be impracticable; he insisted, and I yielded, the more readily that the continuity of our retreat

would thereby be rendered easier. But what I had suspected proved to be the case; he found the roads flooded, and was compelled to retreat. One of his divisions flanked him, receiving orders to follow such a direction as would eventually bring about its junction with him and us; we had to protect Lauriston's return. At one bad place several carriages were driven off the road, and got into the fields, where they remained, mine among others. I came up at this moment; the ammunition waggons were unloaded so that they might be more easily moved, but nevertheless we lost some. We gained a fairly sheltered place, where we posted the cavalry. Near there we expected to meet General Lauriston's little division that had flanked his corps; it was not to be seen; inquiries and searches were instituted, but there was no news of it. All the troops were marching in disorder, wet to the skin, and, as Lauriston's and my corps were going to Löwenberg, we learned that the bridge over the Bober had been dismantled, as the river had overflowed, and thus that our means of passage was gone. In consequence of the floods, which were out in all directions, I was unable to communicate with Souham or Sebastiani, who were retiring upon Bunzlau, where there was a wooden bridge already very rickety; the engineers did their utmost to preserve it.

I waited four-and-twenty hours for the little

division; the cavalry sent me word that they could no longer remain in the position where I had posted them; their searches for the division had been fruitless. Meanwhile, although water covered the road leading to Bunzlau, along which Souham and Sebastiani were marching, a rumour spread among the troops that the road was practicable, as there was only water on it up to the knees; thereupon, without orders, they started in confusion, as it was impossible to restrain them. I therefore let them go. I was compelled to recall the cavalry, and to abandon the wandering division, convinced that it would find its own way out of the difficulty somehow; but I afterwards had the grief of learning that, owing to the slowness of the General* in command, it had been obliged to surrender.

The rain had ceased, and the sun reappeared; we made a forced march, and eventually reached Bunzlau, where I found Generals Souham and Sebastiani. A large portion of their corps had crossed the bridge, as the two others had done, and continued a disorderly march to Bautzen; I sent orders to them to rally there. I could not gauge our losses; with the exception of the artillery on the heights of Jauer, and the little division, they were inconsiderable. Having rallied all the troops, I took up my position.

I had sent a report of all these circumstances

* Puthod.

to Dresden. The Emperor, to whom the loss naturally appeared great, imagined that it was greater even than it was; he expected to find the troops demoralized and in disorder, and was agreeably surprised at finding them reunited, and in good spirits.

The enemy had followed us, but on seeing our position appeared unwilling to risk an attack. The Emperor gave them no alternative. Having arrived with his reserves and his Guard, and saying nothing to me except that my news to him had been bad, he ordered me to advance and attack. We were soon ready, and marched forward eagerly; the enemy were driven back by our cavalry, which had passed for the time under the command of Murat; but they made a good stand on the mountain of Hochchellenberg.

While we were attacking them there, the Emperor, seeing General Sebastiani near me, came towards us, and addressed him as the vilest of men; I was indignant, and showed it. His complaint against the General was not the loss of his artillery on the plateau at Jauer, but that of his last cannon. Sebastiani, as I then learned from the Emperor, had sent him, without informing me, a private report; he interrogated the aide-de-camp who brought this report, pressed him with questions, and was told by him that his General, who had only one gun left, which he feared to lose, had sent it on with the baggage

waggons, which, by another misfortune, had fallen into the enemy's hands. The Emperor added that the loss of artillery was the fortune of war; but that what irritated him was the seizure of that particular piece, seeing that artillery was provided for the protection of the troops, and not to be defended by baggage waggons. I warmly and heartily stood up for Sebastiani. The Emperor departed, leaving the command to me, with orders to follow the enemy.

Sebastiani was furious, and with reason, for he had not been spared even in presence of his own men. He wished to blow his brains out, cause himself to be killed, or send in his resignation. With great trouble I succeeded in calming him.

The enemy rapidly retreated, and our pursuit did not tarry. They crossed the river Queiss, which I left between us; as fresh reinforcements reached them they tried to turn us. My orders were not to expose myself to any serious action; in my turn, therefore, I retired, but slowly; we thus continued alternately advancing and retreating. They also did not seem very anxious to attack, unless they could feel certain of getting the best of it; but as they displayed numerous forces, I fell back to within a few leagues of Dresden. We were very badly off for provisions and forage. The detachments which I was compelled to send out to search the villages were often obliged to

come to blows, and soldiers who went out singly generally fell into the hands of the enemy. We were thus being slowly undermined, but the moment was not far off at which decisive operations would put a limit to this state of things; the allies were preparing for it.

CHAPTER V.

Concentration at Dresden—Contradictory Orders—Movements of the Enemy—Battle of Leipsic—Commencement of the Retreat—Treachery of the Hessians—Destruction of the Bridge—Confusion and Disorder—Passage of the Elster—A Terrible Spectacle—Reception by the Emperor—Loss of Carriages.

DRESDEN, where the Emperor stayed, was the pivot for the army astride on the two banks of the Elbe; we remained on the defensive; communications were intercepted with France, whence we had drawn no help since the fresh outbreak of hostilities. The Emperor one morning sent one of his orderly officers to me to ask my opinion upon our situation, and what we had better do. We were now in October—without rations, except such as could be collected by main force; but the soldiers were allowed to dig for themselves as many potatoes as they could find in the fields where we encamped. I told the officer plainly that, unless the Emperor immediately took the offensive—that is, if he saw any chance of success, which, in my opinion, was improbable, as we had hitherto failed to force our

entrance into Bohemia—he exposed us to serious catastrophes: the army was daily growing weaker by sickness and the ordinary losses of war; that an unsuccessful battle would weaken us still further, and use up our ammunition, which we could not replace; that the magazines were empty, the country ruined; that, under these circumstances, the prudent course would be to retire immediately to the Saale, leaving a strong garrison in Leipsic, and to evacuate those places on the Oder with which we could still communicate, and, above all, those on the Elbe. The officer hesitated for a moment at the idea of having to carry such proposals.

'Go!' I said; 'the Emperor will realize their importance, and will be pleased with me for my outspokenness.'

He came back in a few hours to tell me that he had fulfilled his mission; that the Emperor, being in his bath, had called him in, and, after hearing him attentively, had made but one objection—namely, that the Saale was not a defensive position; that there was nothing but the Rhine; and that, since I thought retreat was necessary, we would go to the Rhine.

'Go and tell the Marshal that,' he added.

'Quite so,' I answered. 'The Saale was only provisional in my proposal; the defiles leading thither are difficult, and we can hold the enemy longer in check there than on the Elbe.'

He departed; but scarcely had he left me, when another orderly officer came to bring me an order not to commence the preliminary execution of my plan, but to advance at once. My reconnaissances and forage parties were already out, and I was consequently very weakened. I told the officer to point out to the Emperor that I could not start until they had returned, and to add that, as I was compelled to send out for provisions, I begged him to give me his orders twenty-four hours in advance. It was not long before he returned, saying that the Emperor desired me to set out immediately with what troops I had, that the absentees would join me later, and that he himself would come with his Guard and his reserves.

I therefore started, leaving behind my heavy ordnance, as well as my baggage. A wood separated us from the enemy. At sight of us they fell back upon the heights of Bischofswerda. We left on our right a feeble line of their cavalry, from which we were separated by a deep ravine which formed a prolonged circuit, and also covered the hill where I had left my siege guns. While I was attacking the heights of Bischofswerda, the Emperor came up to this artillery; he sent for me, and I found him helping to place it in position, and pushing with all his might to help the gunners.

'What are you going to fire at, Sire?' I asked him.

'At that line of cavalry down there in front of us.'

'But it is out of range, your Majesty! I saw it as I came back! They are only scouts; and there is but one line of them!'

'Never mind,' he replied, and gave the word to fire.

We could not see where the shot fell, and the cavalry remained motionless; I could not understand his object. At the seventeenth shot he ordered this useless fire to cease, remarking:

'It is costing us too much.'

The enemy were driven back from the heights, and we followed them. The Emperor called me aside, and said:

'You were surprised at my firing?'

'Yes,' I answered, 'because that handful of cavalry was not worth powder and shot, besides being out of range.'

It had, moreover, just retreated.

'You see,' continued the Emperor, 'that with every volley one hits something; it may be a man of mark. Look at Moreau!—he was killed by a spent shot at Dresden. Look at Duroc, or Bessières!'

As a matter of fact, Moreau had both legs cut off by a shot which was far from spent.

The Emperor moved his headquarters to Harta, or Horta; he invited me to dinner, and, instead of talking of our circumstances, would think of

nothing but a lawsuit, then in progress, against some former contractors. In answer to my request to have his opinion on the issue of the case, he replied, laughing, that the whole lot of them—plaintiffs, defendants, and witnesses — deserved hanging. On quitting him, I asked for his orders; he answered that he must sleep on them, and would let me have them in the morning. He sent them; and I was to march, because he wished to come up with the enemy and give battle.

I sent orders to my advance guard, on the other side of Bischofswerda, to march. An orderly officer from the Emperor accompanied me in order to report to him the position of the enemy, who were not far off. On the way, an aide-de-camp came to warn me that they were in great force; the orderly officer wished to return immediately to inform the Emperor.

'No,' said I; 'follow me. We will reconnoitre for ourselves, and then you will be able to say to the Emperor, "I have seen."'

The enemy seemed to have a force of about 80,000 men, and to be quite ready to receive us, or to cut us off. I told this to the Emperor, who replied that his object was gained, and that I was to profit by the darkness to return to the positions I had quitted on the previous day. He returned to Dresden. I was only disturbed by some demonstrations, but the day seemed very long, isolated as I was since the Emperor had left me;

fortunately, the enemy had been warned of his arrival, but not of his departure.

Two days later he summoned me to Dresden. I told him that we could now see nothing of the enemy except some scouts; that they were preparing some movement, and perhaps manœuvring to turn our flank.

'It cannot be to attack the entrenched camp on the right bank,' he replied; 'they are too timid to attack that.'

That evening when I returned, I heard that the enemy had suddenly disappeared entirely from in front of us, and were making for my left. Some prisoners were brought to me who confirmed the departure of their troops, which were, they said, going to Mühlberg, to cross the Elbe there. I sent them to the Emperor with my report.

That same night I received orders to abandon my position, and to come and occupy the entrenched camp, which other troops had hastily left; and twenty-four hours later I was relieved in my turn, and told to go on to Wittenberg. The Emperor was anxious to cross the Elbe there; and my advance guard had already started, when he received intelligence that the allies had quitted Bohemia, and were advancing towards Leipsic; thereupon I received counter-orders to make for the Partha.

A portion of the allied forces was already in

position at about two leagues from Leipsic. It was October 16; I well remember the date. We attacked with more vigour than unison, and one of my divisions carried a position known as the Swedish Redoubt at the point of the bayonet. It was necessary to support them. The cavalry came up sharply, and did very well; but the carabineers behaved very badly. With my own eyes I saw a squadron of the enemy outwit them at only ten sabres' length. Each side remained in much the same position at the end of the combat.

Next day, the 17th, although we were facing one another, within range, not a shot was fired—not even from a musket; but we could see the reinforcements taking their places in the enemy's ranks, and could distinctly hear the cheers of the soldiers. The night was equally tranquil. On either side everything was preparing for a bloody battle.

Early next morning, the 18th, the Emperor closed up his ranks; the enemy were already advancing to attack us. I had orders only to retire very slowly, which I did, but not without great losses, among others that of General Aubry, commanding the artillery belonging to my corps. At length I reached the lines. The cannonade was so violent, so multiplied, so extreme, that it might have been compared to a fire from two ranks of infantry, and very well maintained, more-

over. I again lost a large number of my men, many of my artillery horses; one gun was dismounted, my ammunition was consumed. I ordered my infantry to shelter in ravines, and behind little risings in the ground. I thus remained inactive for several hours, while the battle continued with a violence equal to that with which it had begun, exposed to the fire of the enemy, to which I could not reply.

The army was then forming a crescent before Leipsic, of which one extremity was flanked by the Elster. I implored the Emperor to replace my artillery; he at length sent me a battery of the Guard, which arrived most conveniently, for the enemy, noticing that from this point they obtained no answer to their fire, concluded that they had silenced mine, and as they could see no troops, they thought they might establish themselves upon the raised point that I occupied. I soon undeceived them. As they boldly advanced, my troops suddenly showed themselves, protected by the batteries that had come to me; they retired, and their firing recommenced, but less violently than before; either they were economizing their ammunition, or else some of their guns had been dismounted too.

I was walking about with Colonel Bongars, and we deplored the great number of victims stretched at our feet; preoccupied solely with what was going on under our eyes, and with the

melancholy issue that I foresaw, I regretted that the cannon spared me while striking down so many brave men. While we were talking over these sad circumstances, I saw the enemy retreat on my left, and the corps of General Reynier, drawn up in two lines, advance. The leading line was composed of Saxons, the rear of French. I gave orders to advance to their support, when what was my horror at seeing the front rank stop at the point the enemy had just quitted, and, turning round, fire straight at the French behind them! Never was such treachery known in history. In the preceding year, when the Prussians deserted, at least they had the decency not to turn and fire upon us at the moment. Amazed, surprised, the second line fled, and was immediately pursued by the front line, which an instant before had been fighting under our banner. That there had been connivance was clear from the fact that the enemy supported this movement, and it would have been decisive for them had not the Emperor hastened to the spot to stop them and rally the line.

It was growing late; the fire slackened on either side, and finally ceased altogether. Everyone kept his own position—at least, on the side where I had been all day—but our left had been pushed nearer to Leipsic. We passed the night in the utmost watchfulness, foreseeing a too tardy

retreat, but in nowise prepared for the next day's catastrophe.

An officer was sent from headquarters to convey to me orders to retire to the suburb of Leipsic at the end of the high-road to Dresden; but he lost his way, and only arrived at seven in the morning.* A thick fog fortunately obscured our position, and we were able, therefore, to fall back unperceived. The other army corps had done the same thing, and we thus formed a fresh line. As the parks of artillery could not be moved, they were blown up; nothing could have been devised more likely to put the enemy on the alert and announce a decided retreat, and they were not slow to profit by it, advancing to the heights which commanded my position. The gardens of the suburb were enclosed by earth-banks, which might serve as a slight bulwark against infantry and cavalry, but were useless against cannon. We had barricaded all the issues, crenellated the walls, but that served us very little against a hail of bullets, which did frightful execution in the houses and among the troops. The enemy advanced in close columns; we stopped them for a moment. The fire was very hot, when General Girardin, at that time aide-de-camp to the Prince of Neuchâtel, brought me orders to immediately send a division to the extreme right to the assistance of Marshal Augereau.

* October 19.

'See for yourself,' I answered, 'whether I can spare any troops; I rather stand in need of reinforcements myself. Go and tell the Emperor so.'

'I have executed my mission,' said he; 'you must do as you please;' and he left me.

I had not even troops enough to keep my front in every direction, but I reflected that if Marshal Augereau's corps, and consequently the intermediaries between him and me, were forced, I, who formed a point, should be flanked and cut off, and I consequently determined to send, not a division, but a brigade of the Hessian division.

During this time, although we were defending the ground foot by foot, and the suburb had been taken and retaken several times, we were pushed right back to the boulevard of the town. I was then informed that the Hessian brigade was on its way back, having found neither friends nor foes at the point to which they were ordered, and this caused me great surprise. As I was pressed in front, I desired Prince Poniatowski to attempt a final charge, with the small body of cavalry remaining to us, while I drew the infantry back to the bridge in order to cross the Elster. The Hessian division had in the meantime entered the town, and I presumed it was by orders of General Marchand, who was in command. But instead of marching to the Elster by the broad street that leads to the bridge, the division went

up to the ramparts, and opened fire upon us. This fresh treachery effectually discouraged our troops. They retreated in confusion, notwithstanding my efforts to maintain order, and dragged me with them. To complete our misfortunes, I learned that the bridge, our only means of communication, had been blown up.

This appalling news, which we vainly strove to conceal, spread universal consternation; upon every face horror, fury, despair, were painted, and I was not the least excited among them. Neither before, during, or since the battle, had any precaution been taken to secure the Elster or the road to Lindenau—albeit, it would have been easy to find many places at which men of different arms and of different corps could have crossed, owing to the narrowness of the river. Neither had any troop been posted on the left bank to protect the retreat on the chance of the bridge remaining intact, or of others being established. The principal headquarters and the Emperor himself were at Markranstadt. I do not yet know by what name to call this criminal indifference: whether incapability, cowardice, or absence of all feeling, of all regret at the sacrifice of so many lives.

The bridge had been blown up several hours previously, but the noise of the cannon, of the fusillade, and of the ammunition waggons that were being exploded, had prevented us from hearing

the noise. An attempt was made to lay at the door of a superior engineer officer the responsibility for this act, but no one dared to take steps to bring him before a court-martial; for it was quite clear that he had received no orders, and that on the contrary he had suggested to the Major-General the advisability of preparing points from which to cross, and that the answer given him had been that it would be time enough when the Emperor ordered it.

Here is the most likely version of this catastrophe: The bridge had been mined, and left in charge of an unlucky corporal and some artillerymen or sappers, with orders to blow it up if they perceived the enemy. These poor fellows saw, heard, knew that part of the army was still on the right bank, but they did not know that there were no other points from which they could cross; they saw a few of the enemy's skirmishers, and that was enough to make them carry out their orders.

It was said afterwards that, even had the bridge remained intact, we could not have made use of it, as it and the approaches to it were blocked by artillery and waggons. That may have been so, but at least the infantry might have attempted to cross, the cavalry would have abandoned their horses, and thus many lives might have been saved. The block arose from the fact that no supervision had been exercised,

no orders given to keep this passage clear. Two strings of carriages were passing to the right and left of the boulevards of Leipsic, a third along the principal street of the town; all three met at the head of the bridge, and it was a struggle which should get across first; the carriages caught each other's wheels, blocked up the space, and our unhappy fate was decided.

I escaped, however, with a firm resolve not to fall alive into the hands of the enemy, preferring to shoot or drown myself. Dragged along, as I have said, by the crowd, I crossed two little arms of the Elster, the first on a little bridge, holding on to the hand-rail, for my feet did not touch the boards (I was lifted up, and ten times over was nearly upset); the other upon a horse, lent me by a quarter-master, whose name I am sorry to have forgotten, though I have since rendered him a service.

I found myself in an open field, still surrounded by the crowd; I wandered about, it still followed me, convinced that I must know a way out, though I could find none marked on my map. There was still the main arm of the river. Lauriston, who had been with me before we crossed the streams, was separated from me. Some of Prince Poniatowski's aides-de-camp came and told me he was drowned; I still thought he was behind me. I had begged him, as I have related, to execute a charge, and had not seen

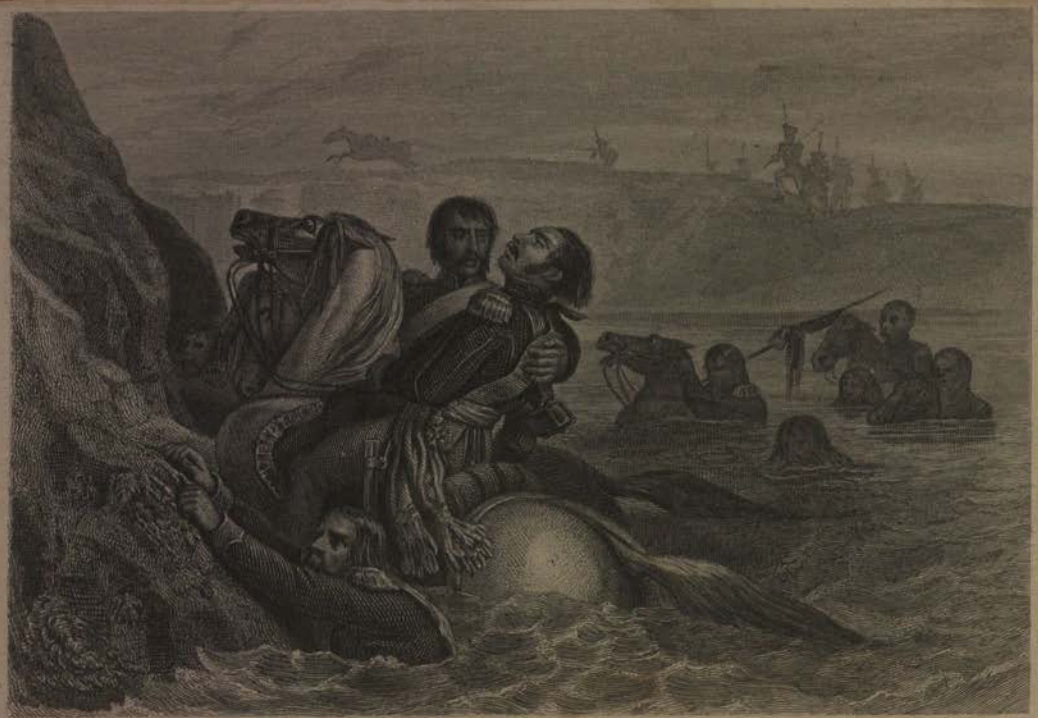
him since his return. The charge had not taken place; the cavalry, having heard of the disaster at the bridge, had not followed him, and had thought of nothing but their own safety. These aides-de-camp shed tears on telling me of the death* of their Prince: he had thrown himself into the water with his horse, but had been unable to climb the opposite bank, which was very steep; the horse had fallen backwards upon him, and both had been carried away by the swift stream.

During this story one of my aides-de-camp, Beurnonville, seized my bridle and said:

'Monsieur le Maréchal, we cannot help that; the important thing is to save you.'

Thereupon he hurried me away at a gallop to free me from the unhappy crowd that still surrounded me, and told me that Colonel Marion, who commanded the engineers in my army corps, had succeeded in crossing to the other side. He had had two trees cut down and thrown across the river, joining them with doors, shutters and planks. We hastened thither, but the place was blocked by troops. I was told that Marshals Augereau and Victor had crossed this frail structure on horseback, notwithstanding all the representations that were made to them; that as the

* Prince Poniatowski had only been created a Marshal three days before his untimely end! Rather than be taken prisoner, he leapt his horse into the rapid stream, though exhausted by a severe wound. His body was recovered five days later by a fisherman.



Raffet del. Frilley sc.

THE DROWNING OF PONIATOWSKI IN THE ELBE

Paris for Richard Bentley and Son 1892

Printed by Ch. Wittmann Paris

extremities were not fastened, and the two trees had slipped apart, the flooring had given way. There remained nothing but the two trunks, and no one dared cross them. It was my only chance; I made up my mind and risked it. I got off my horse with great difficulty, owing to the crowd, and there I was, one foot on either trunk, and the abyss below me. A high wind was blowing. I was wearing a large cloak with loose sleeves, and, fearing lest the wind should cause me to lose my balance, or lest someone should lay hold of it, I got rid of it. I had already made three-quarters of my way across, when some men determined to follow me; their unsteady feet caused the trunks to shake, and I fell into the water. I could fortunately touch the bottom, but the bank was steep, the soil loose and greasy; I vainly struggled to reach the shore. Some of the enemy's skirmishers came up, I know not whence. They fired at me point-blank, and missed me, and some of our men, who happened to be near, drove them off and helped me out.

I was wet from head to foot, besides being in a violent perspiration from my efforts, and out of breath. The Duke of Ragusa, who had got across early in the day, seeing me on the other bank, gave me a horse; I wanted dry clothes more, but they were not to be had.

One of my grooms, named Naudet, who had charge of my pocket-book, not daring to come

across, confided it to a soldier, who undressed and swam with it. I had no money to give him. Marshal Marmont lent me his purse, and I gave it to the man. He accompanied us, naked as he was, for three leagues, and I was still dripping.

While we were still near the Elster, some skirmishers of the enemy came up in large numbers; I took about thirty men who had been posted not far from there to protect a cannon, and charged and dispersed them.

On the other side of the Elster the firing continued; it suddenly ceased. Our unhappy troops were crowded together on the river-bank; whole platoons plunged into the water and were carried away; cries of despair rose from all sides. The men perceived me. Despite the noise and the tumult, I distinctly heard these words:

'Monsieur le Maréchal, save your men! save your children!'

I could do nothing for them! Overcome by rage, indignation, fury, I wept!

Unable to give any assistance to these poor fellows, I quitted the scene of desolation. Some of those who had seen me fall into the river believed me drowned; the rumour of my death spread rapidly, together with that of Prince Poniatowski, among the broken remains of the army which had succeeded in crossing the Elster, and at headquarters. Great joy was shown when I was found to be alive; all embraced me, wish-

ing to know the details of the appalling disaster and of my marvellous escape. The Emperor desired to see me. I was so indignant with him that I refused to accompany his messengers. However, I was so earnestly begged and implored to go and give advice, in the interests of the army and of France, that, for fear of some new piece of folly, I at last yielded.

There were a number of people with the Emperor, among others Count Daru. He was seated at a table, a map spread before him, and his head on his hand. With tears I related all that had happened.

For a long time I was haunted by the terrible picture, and the cries of my men, 'Save your soldiers! Save your children!' still ring in my ears, and excite in my breast the deepest pity for the poor fellows whom I saw throwing themselves into the water, preferring certain death to the risk of being massacred or taken prisoners.

The Emperor listened without interrupting me; my audience were affected in various degrees, and all by their attitude displayed their grief. I ended by saying that the losses of the army in men and material were immense, and that not a moment should be lost in collecting the remains, and making for the Rhine. We were then at Markranstadt; I had walked three leagues, still wet, and very tired. The Emperor noticed it, and said coldly:

'Go and rest.'

I left him, indignant at his indifference, for he offered me neither refreshment nor help,* and yet I think I had said, in the course of my narration, that I had lost everything, baggage and carriages. After I had been pulled out of the river, the Duke of Ragusa told me that he had seen my carriages in the block on the boulevard at Leipsic, going in an opposite direction to the one I was following, while I, all the time, believed them to be at headquarters. The previous evening I had sent orders that they should start, while the roads were yet clear and open ; but, by another fatality, the aide-de-camp who was in charge of them fell asleep, and when he awoke it was too late. They were thus lost, together with a bag containing from 12,000 to 15,000 francs in gold (£480 to £600), which he had orders to keep in his portmanteau. He explained to me later that the fear lest it should be stolen in camp had decided him to place this bag in my carriage, whence he had forgotten to rescue it when he was compelled to abandon everything, and flee with my attendants. I had also lost a great deal of silver money with my carriages. This circumstance having become known, everyone, as I left the

* It could hardly be expected that at a time when the Ruler of France and Head of the Army had vital matters to settle he should have time to also undertake the duties of an attentive host. Under the circumstances, his advice was not other than sensible.

Emperor's presence, cordially offered me all the things of which I stood in need—changes of clothes, and their purses; but when I opened my pocket-book, I found a good number of twenty-franc pieces inside, and therefore refused the latter.

CHAPTER VI.

Marshal Augereau—Passage of the Saale—At Erfurt—Plain Speaking—Arrival at Gelnhausen—Discouragement—In Hanau Woods—Issue from the Woods—Entry into Hanau.

NEXT day, October 20, at dawn, we started. About 800 or 900 men, the remains of my army corps, had been rallied, and with these I marched. As we were without artillery or carriages, while the roads were encumbered with them, we marched along very easily. We crossed the Saale by a covered bridge, and I encamped for the night on the opposite side. I met Marshal Augereau, and asked him for an explanation of the order brought to me from the Emperor by General Girardin to send a division to his support, while I was bearing the brunt of so severe a combat in the suburbs of Leipsic; and, further, why nobody had been found in the place named. He replied with an oath:

'That idiot does not know what he is about! Have you not already noticed that? Have you not observed that he has completely lost his head in these recent events, and in the catastrophe by

which they have been followed? The coward! He abandoned and was prepared to sacrifice us all; but do you imagine that I am fool enough to let myself be killed or made prisoner for the sake of a Leipsic suburb? You should have done as I did, and have gone away!'*

That was all I could get out of him.

Next morning we started again; on the road we met the provision waggons belonging to the Imperial Guard. For myself I had not a morsel of bread. I asked for some. The inspector or commissary in charge of the waggons made difficulties.

'Your carriages are lost,' I said, 'and will fall a prey to the enemy. Distribute at once your food and provisions to the troops around you.'

I at last obtained five or six loaves from him, which I divided among my officers.

We had to recross the Saale. A weak bridge had been thrown across for the infantry, who precipitated themselves on to it in crowds, and caused it to give way. Nobody took command. I spent at least two hours in trying to re-establish order, and at last crossed over myself without having succeeded. It was then between two and four o'clock in the afternoon; I was told that the principal headquarters were in a village hard by. I saw the Emperor in front of a house, lounging

* Characteristic advice of the Marshal who abandoned the second City of the Empire (Lyons) in the succeeding year.

in a chair. He did not appear to see me. His Master of the Horse, Caulaincourt, beckoned me in, and gave me a loaf of bread, a chicken, and a bottle of wine. I had not broken my fast, and received these refreshments with avidity and gratitude.

The Prince Major-General told me that he had sent me orders to continue my march, and that a little further on I should find a broken bridge, which was being repaired; I went thither. I was alone with a groom. My officers had crossed the Saale pell-mell, while I betook myself to headquarters for further orders; they thought I was going to return. I found a company of pontoniers and sappers at work; men on foot and led horses could pass, but not carriages. These men had been eating some broth, and I asked if they had any left.

'Yes,' they replied, and brought me some. I dipped bread into it, and ate it greedily.

After this light repast I examined the place, and saw that no precautions had been taken to cover the bridge under repair. It was visible from the slope of a range of mountains, at the summit of which the enemy could place artillery and blow it to pieces, and that of course happened.

I again crossed in order to see if I could discover their number, and some of our skirmishers were sent in their direction. At the

first gunshot the Emperor crossed the frail little bridge used by the workmen, and I saw him going away at a rapid trot on the other side. A column of our troops came at last to cover the principal bridge; before their front rank reached it I crossed it once more, and went to headquarters.

I did not know what had become of my little troop and my officers. I therefore remounted my horse, and followed the marching troops. It was now quite dark, and, as the road was blocked, we gained a bank that ran near it at the risk of breaking our necks by falling into the ravines or ruts; at length we reached the place where the headquarters were established. As I passed the Emperor's house, Caulaincourt recognised me, and begged me to come in and dine with the staff—they were just going to sit down; I accepted.

Next morning a little advance-guard was collected for me; the enemy were scouring the country. Late that night we reached Erfurt. The town, occupied by our troops, possessed a strong castle; General d'Alton was in command; but the gates were shut, as disorder was feared from arrivals late at night, though they did not escape it even on the following day. Stores of all kinds had been formed there; to save time and formalities they were burst open and pillaged.

We had been there for some hours when the Emperor sent for me. I went to the castle, and first saw the King of Naples, who cautioned me that the Emperor's intention was to order me to find a strong defensive position, where he could remain for five or six days.

'You had better find a weak one,' added Murat with an oath, 'or he will not rest till he has ruined himself and us too.'

'Never fear,' I replied. 'Even if the position be excellent, I will tell him my mind about our situation.'

I was ushered in. The Emperor gave me the commission of which Murat had warned me.

'It is out of the question to make a reconnaissance at this moment,' I said, 'because there is such a thick fog that it is impossible to see fifteen yards ahead. 'But,' I continued, 'are you in earnest in talking of remaining here?'

'The men are tired,' said the Emperor, 'and the enemy pursuing slowly. We must give them a rest.'

'No doubt that would be advisable, or even necessary under other circumstances,' I replied; 'but in our present state of disorganization, or demoralization, as I may as well call things by their proper names, you will gain nothing by it. We must get to the Rhine as fast as possible. The majority of the men are already in disorder, and making their way thither.'

'But yet I am told that a considerable number have been stopped, and fifteen battalions formed.'

'You are being flattered and deceived,' I said with firmness. 'Exactly the same thing happened after the death of Turenne and the rout of his army. The courtiers told Louis XIV. that the troops were coming back across the Rhine in such numbers that, counting them all, there were now more men than there had ever been in the army. Louis XIV. himself made this judicious remark. Your men are going away pell-mell; all our efforts to stop them have been vain—their instinct urges them towards the Rhine. No one amongst us is ignorant of the defection of the King of Bavaria, nor of his treaty with the allies, nor of the movement that General Wrede is making by forced marches to cut off our retreat between this and Frankfort; and that, clearly, is why they are pursuing so slowly—to retard our march, and give Wrede time to get round. If he reaches Gelnhausen' (a place that I already knew), 'it is very doubtful that we shall be able to dislodge him—if he have had time to establish himself, that is; and he will have plenty if you remain here for two or three days. You can now only count upon the Guard, and beware lest they be carried away by the force of example, as in the last campaign.'

All these reflections were self-evident.

The Emperor's attitude was one of profound

meditation. Three other persons were in his room, and they had ceased writing in order to listen—two of them were, I think, his private secretaries; the third, the Duke of Bassano, placed his pen between his teeth, and folded his arms. He kept his eyes fixed upon me, and displayed astonishment at hearing, for the first time, the Emperor addressed with such freedom and outspokenness. I stopped to hear his decision. He at length broke silence, saying that he recognised the justice of my observations, thanked me for my honesty, and would reflect upon what I had said, but that, meanwhile, he wished me to make the reconnaissance.

I left, and returned some hours later to report that the fog had not lifted, which was true, and that consequently I had only been able to observe what was immediately before my eyes—namely, that the neighbourhood of the town was very steep and uneven. Thereupon he said:

'Very good; we will start to-morrow.'

'Even that will be too late,' I answered; 'we ought to start at once. The men are continually leaving laden with booty.'

Nobody had attempted to stop the pillage. We had no choice but to remain where we were till next day.

On reaching Gelnhausen, I found the position occupied, fortunately weakly, by about 1,000 men. The Kintzig covered it, and the bridge had

already been broken, but so hurriedly that the beams were still floating about. Some of the enemy's pickets came near us. Many isolated men had stopped; I formed them into companies, and made up a battalion. The enemy had no cannon at this point, and with mine I drove them away from the river.

As soon as the bridge was sufficiently repaired, I ordered an attack. The position might have been ambushed. The enemy were so weak that they made no effort to keep us back; but if they had had time to establish themselves, I do not know if we should have managed to move them. Later on they received reinforcements, principally of cavalry; we skirmished all day, continually advancing towards a village, which we reached as night was drawing on. There was a castle in the place, and the Emperor came thither to take up his quarters, although he had already fixed them in a little village in the rear. Everything, therefore, had to be repacked, and the waggons reloaded for the move. In the village just mentioned, there was only one uncomfortable house; while in the place where I was, and whither he came, there was a castle, uninhabited, but furnished.

I had information that the Bavarian army was at Hanau. Its strength was unknown; but it had begun to arrive the previous evening, and troops had been coming in that same day. There

had only been just time, therefore, to send a detachment to Gelnhausen, and some troops of cavalry to other points from Hanau. I had this information from a person who had come thence that very day, and who had been an eye-witness of what he told me.

The Emperor then sent for me, and inquired whether he were in safety, as his Guard had not yet come up.

'I cannot answer for it,' I replied. 'We only arrived after dark, shortly before you; and I do not even know whether all my troops followed me.'

'Are we, then, with the outposts?'

'Yes.'

He kept me to dinner, and sent for the person who had arrived that evening from Hanau, and whose words I had repeated. He liked to ask questions for himself, but he learned no more than I had told him. He declared that the Bavarians would not stand up against him. The next day proved him mistaken.

At daybreak* I started on my march. A short distance away we met the outposts, supported by a strong advance-guard. I had to stop and wait till our cavalry came up, and crossed sabres with the enemy. We pushed them back into the Hanau woods, whither we followed them. A fusillade began which my handful of troops could not stand; I made them retire into shelter several

* October 30.

times. I also ordered the cavalry to charge in order to support my infantry. This state of things had lasted for some hours, when, wishing to see what was taking place on the high road, I ventured out with some of my staff. As soon as we appeared we were greeted by a hot fire of cannon and musketry which compelled us to withdraw hastily into the wood. I had, however, had time to glance at the enemy's position, and what I could see of it was not very encouraging, nor calculated to inspire my troops with confidence.

All my messages to the Emperor to warn him of the resistance we had met with, of the reduction of our small means (of which the enemy, fortunately, could not judge, as they were scattered about the wood), and of the urgent necessity for help, remained unnoticed. I was much pressed to go to him in person; but I feared that if I left the men would become discouraged — my presence kept them together. As we were not more than a quarter of a league from headquarters, I at length made up my mind; and, in order to escape observation, ordered a fresh charge of cavalry into the wood, and started at full gallop. On reaching the Emperor, I spoke to him very energetically about the position of affairs.

'What can I do?' he said carelessly. 'I give orders, and no one heeds them. I wished to

assemble all the waggons at one point under a cavalry escort. Well, nobody came to do it!'

'I can quite believe it,' I returned; 'these men have experience and instinct, and rightly presume that the road by which you wish them to communicate is closed to us. But consider that our situation is no ordinary one. You must force a passage, sire, and send, without an instant's delay, all the troops at your disposal. Why have not the Guard come up? We shall be utterly done for if they don't come immediately.'

'I can't help it,' he answered coldly.

Formerly at a sign, a gesture, a word, all had trembled around him, or he would have known the reason why! However, he summoned the Major-General, who declared that he also had given orders. They were repeated, the assembly was sounded, and I went away with a promise that a portion of the Guard would come and place themselves under my orders. I announced this news, and it encouraged the soldiers a little. The firing and the little charges continued; the Guard did not arrive — impatience reappeared. At length the bearskins of the Old Guard came in view; I pointed them out, and said that this troop would take our places while we rested.

Four battalions of chasseurs arrived; the General in command of them asked for my orders; I caused half of them to be deployed as sharp-shooters, flanked by platoons, and the two others

in line to support them. They advanced to the action. The mere sight of these veterans made the enemy retire from the wood; but it was still difficult to get clear of it, or even to line the fringe. The enemy continued to fire volleys of grapeshot and shells. We kept our position; that was a great deal. The Emperor came up, followed by his Guard and some other troops; he asked for information, which I gave him, reckoning the enemy's force as at least 30,000 men.

'Can we observe their position without danger?' he asked.

'Not without danger; we must risk it; I have already done it once.'

'Very good; come along.'

And away we went. Just as we were starting a shell burst close to him without hurting anyone. Straightway he stopped, dismounted from his horse, and from that moment till the evening it was impossible to get him out of the wood. He ordered General Drouot to discover a position on the right of the road where he could post the artillery of the Guard. The danger was extreme, but this brave General, as modest as he was distinguished, never gave it a thought. In order to cause a diversion at this point, the Emperor ordered his cavalry to debouch on to the high-road; the *grenadiers à cheval* were in front. They charged, but were brought back and protected by a regiment of 'guards of honour,' com-

posed of young men of good family, who were making their début, but who showed great courage. The *grenadiers* rallied behind this regiment, while the dragoons continued the charge, and repulsed the enemy with great success, breaking their squares.

General Drouot had succeeded, not without severe losses, in establishing his batteries, and others were afterwards mounted at other points. We had also succeeded in reaching the fringe of the wood; the enemy were retreating in every direction, and recrossing the river; but they still maintained their defence of Hanau, and there was still on our right a strong battery, which we could not succeed in silencing, and which was doing us considerable damage. We might have obtained great advantages from the retreat of the Bavarians, but as the Emperor spent the whole day in the wood, he could see nothing, and everyone acted as he pleased without any unison whatever. There seemed to be an idea that we had done enough in reaching the river and driving back the enemy; and no one observed, apparently, that, situated as we were, it was most important for us to reach the other side, and that, until Hanau had been stormed, communication with France must continue closed.

The day was drawing to an end, and the battery just mentioned caused us great inconvenience; the shooting was very straight, and was aimed at

the point where the wood debouched into the high-road. I was there in person.

Nansouty's cavalry came through the wood. I asked him to charge and carry the battery; he refused, alleging the fatigue of his men.

'Pretend to, then,' I said, but received only the same answer.

I was urging him with some considerable heat, when one of the Emperor's aides-de-camp, General Flahaut, chanced to pass. Seeing me very excited, he inquired what was the matter.

'Look here,' I said, 'a slight effort would secure us that battery. If the Emperor were here, something would be done—duty, at least, if nothing more! Situated as we are here, it is of importance to overcome every obstacle, and to force our way.'

'Would you like to see the Emperor?' he said. 'I will bring him to you.'

'Do, if you can,' I answered.

It was now late, and instead of coming himself, he sent orders to Nansouty to act. The latter moved at last. As soon as the enemy saw him, they retreated, which would have been a boon to us a few hours earlier.

I had rallied the remains of my division on the outskirts of the wood. We were at a short distance from Hanau; a few troops advanced thither, but stopped just out of range of a hot fusillade.

We had been at ease for some time, when I

saw a shapeless column, preceded by a lighted torch, issue from the wood and defile along the high road. I was told that a report was spread, no one knew how, of the evacuation of Hanau; and as the Emperor was sure of good quarters there, he had started without any further information. The torch was borne before him. All that had been in the wood, troops, carriages, artillery, led horses, etc., were following him in disorder. I called for my horse in order to head him and warn him of his mistake; but the mass that widened out as it issued from the wood prevented me from passing. I also had to ride carefully along the edge of a ditch by the roadside; however, a few yards further on I was able to cross it, and hastened on for a moment, so as to come up with the head of the column.

Suddenly a few shots were heard; the column stopped, and I saw the torch take a pace to the right and describe a curve retiring into the wood, whence the shapeless and ever-increasing mass was still pouring and pressing on the head thus suddenly arrested. I found myself caught in the mob, unable to advance or retire, without having succeeded in joining the Emperor. I tried to recross the ditch and to regain the edge of the wood, feeling very sorry that I had ever quitted it. At length I lost my temper, and ordered my bodyguard to force a passage for me sword in hand. They at once obeyed, crying:

'Make way! Make way!'

One voice alone could be heard in the crowd asking:

'What guards are those creating such a disturbance?'

It was Count Daru, Commissary-General of the army. I did not feel called upon to answer, or to make myself known. I succeeded in making my way back to the place I had left, leaving the mass to disentangle itself as best it could. Had the enemy known what was going on, and made a sortie from Hanau, the disorder must have been even greater, and their losses immense; happily, their only idea was to retreat.

In the middle of the night the Emperor sent me orders to collect a battery of howitzers, and to fire on the town; the enemy did not reply, whence we concluded that they were unarmed. They moved out at break of day, and our troops occupied the town.

Scarcely had this news penetrated into the wood, when the disorderly mass once more made its way out with no less confusion than on the previous evening. The Emperor himself passed, and gave me orders to relieve the troops in the town, promising that I in turn should be relieved by General Bertrand. I had not perceived until then that all the soldiers remaining to me had left, and had joined themselves to the living torrent that was flowing towards Frankfort,

whither the Emperor was going in person. I sent after them, and recovered about 150 men, whom I brought into Hanau to replace a troop not much larger, of which General Souham had command. I found him in a house in the suburbs; he left, and I entered the town. The enemy were not far off on the other side of the river. The place had an enclosure, but could not resist an attack.

Just as I was sitting down to breakfast, Tuilier, commanding the engineers, whom I had sent to the top of the steeple, came and whispered to me that the enemy were advancing.

'Go back again,' I said, 'and let me know when they are near the gates.'

'They are not far off now,' he replied; 'and you have barely time to retire.'

The fusillade commenced as he was speaking. I left my breakfast, therefore, and, calling the chief officer of my little group of men, told him to hold firm, and that he would be relieved immediately. As I was quitting the town I met General Bertrand, who had orders to relieve us; he asked how many troops he should take in with him.

'All you have will not be enough,' I replied, and continued my journey.

CHAPTER VII.

At Mayence—What Caulaincourt Said—Conversation with the Emperor—Want of Money—Evacuation of Arnheim—Surprise of Neuss—The Enemy Cross the Rhine—Advance into France.

It was only at Frankfort that I found the broken remains of my division; we were rejoined by the detachment I had left at Hanau. I had orders to continue my march to Mayence, which I reached that night. The bridge of boats had been so severely tried by the constant succession of troops, waggons, and artillery, that two pontoons had nearly given way. It had therefore been necessary to stop it from being used, and to close the gates of the *tête-de-pont.* My chief of the staff, who had preceded me, had posted a notice on the gates that all who belonged to my corps were to betake themselves to . . .* and go into cantonments there.

The Emperor sent for me next day, and kept me to dinner. He reviewed all the circumstances and events of the campaign, dealing at length

* Name omitted in original manuscript.

with the bad faith of the allies, especially of Austria at Prague, during the negotiations of the Congress.

Caulaincourt, his Master of the Horse, and the Count of Narbonne, his aide-de-camp, had, however, told me that the entire settlement had been in his hands; that, in reality, he ought to have given up some conquests or combinations, but that he could have retained Italy, the Rhine as a boundary, and the Protectorate of the Helvetian Confederation. That he had been pressed to consent to this, and warned that, in case of refusal, Austria would make common cause with Russia and Prussia. She made no secret of the fact that she was bound by a treaty, which had been obvious for some months past, as the allies, beaten at the beginning of the campaign, had retired into Silesia, to the foot of the mountains of Bohemia, ready to enter if they were driven to it, and this they could not have done had Austria preserved her neutrality. They would have taken good care not to risk having to surrender at the foot of those mountains, as all their communications would have been cut off if they had lost a decisive battle. Moreover, had they not been certain of Austria's co-operation, they would have recrossed the Oder, near Breslau, in their retreat from Jauer. Prudence recommended this course, but the Emperor, blind, and priding himself upon his ascendancy at the Court of Vienna,

which he believed was strengthened by his position as son-in-law, had obstinately refused to consent to the cession of Holland and the Hanse Towns, as well as to renounce the Protectorate of the Confederation of the Rhine. As soon as the armistice was denounced, he authorized his plenipotentiaries to make these concessions; those of the allies, however, replied that it was now too late, and that the question must be settled by war.

'Why,' I inquired, 'did you not consent sooner? The army earnestly desired it; the honour of your arms was repaired; your principal leaders begged it of you, both in the name of the army and of France, so sorely distressed. I myself pointed out the dangers of the situation to you. I represented to you the difficulties France had had in fighting against the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia; what, then, would it be when Austria, Sweden, and other little States leagued themselves with them? Our losses, I admit, had been somewhat repaired, but how? By recruits who were little more than children, by young untrained horses, already worn out by long forced marches. Fresh hostilities would once more intercept our communications; any serious check must infallibly ruin us; we had neither provisions nor ammunition; above all, we had to avoid discouragement, and to keep up the spirits of the men.'

This reasoning had produced no effect upon him during the time of the negotiations; now he admitted it was just.

'I did not agree to these concessions,' he said, 'because I feared that the allies would become more exacting, and would demand still more.'

'But in that case,' I returned, 'why did you, when it was unfortunately too late, end by consenting? Had you done it earlier, you would have given evidence of your desire for peace; France and the army would have been grateful to you, and perhaps would have made greater efforts to secure it. Moreover, all the preliminaries declared that, beyond these concessions, the Emperors would ask for nothing. You might have done more; you might have freed yourself with honour from the canker which is destroying your old troops in Spain, and ruining your treasury, had you restored Spain to herself and her sovereign, and thereby displayed a moderation which must have struck France, your armies, and Europe.'

'Yes,' said he, 'that is true; but now I must retain that country as compensation.'

During this conversation the bulletin of the allies upon the events at Leipsic was handed to him. Perhaps there was some exaggeration in their account, but I had to admit that, on the whole, it was but too true; they were intoxicated with their success, and not without reason.

Our situation was to France and Europe a striking proof of our reverses, of the terrible misfortunes we had already endured, and of those which threatened and must inevitably overwhelm us if peace, which of course could only be purchased by fresh concessions, did not speedily come to save the army and France. To these observations he replied that he was going to try to re-open the negotiations, but that he wished to keep the line of the Rhine, wherein I entirely agreed with him.

He informed me that I was to start for Cologne, and to take command of the line from Mayence to Wesel.

'With what troops?' I asked. 'With what am I to defend a tract of such extent?'

'I will send you some. They are coming in from all sides, and we are raising 300,000 men. You shall have eighty battalions and sixty squadrons. The enemy, hitherto concentrated, will be obliged to spread out, and we shall be strong at all their vulnerable points.'

He thought that the allies would be wearied, and would take up their winter-quarters on the right bank of the Rhine, thus leaving him time to reform and reinforce his armies; but in less than two months we were doomed to be disappointed.

Before we parted he asked me to tell him the amount of my personal losses during the campaign.

I merely said that they were considerable, which was true; I had not even a clean shirt left. He said that he had no money at Mayence, but that he would send me an indemnity from Paris.

'I was rich,' he added, 'at the opening of the campaign in 1812. The armies were well provided, the men paid regularly, and I had left 400,000,000 [of francs] [£16,000,000] in the cellars at the Tuileries, of which 300,000,000 [£12,000,000] came from the contributions levied in Prussia. I drew out 340,000,000 [£13,600,000] to help France in reforming the army in 1813; I have only 60,000,000 [£2,400,000] left. It is very little, and I have so much to do with it!'

This was intended to convey to me that I should only get a very small share. In fact, he only sent me, while I was at Wesel, a draft upon Paris for 30,000 francs (£1,200). I had great difficulty afterwards in getting it cashed, but eventually Monsieur de la Bouillerie, manager of the Crown property, very kindly arranged it for me.

I wrote next day to your eldest sister to send me some linen to Cologne, whither I was going. Souham lent me his carriage, and I started that afternoon, finding my staff and my weak force at Bingen.

Night was drawing on. They made useless efforts to retain me, but I insisted on starting. The road was bad; masters, men, postilions,

everyone was asleep. We upset coming round a sharp curve recently cut in the rock, and, on leaving the carriage, unhurt, found with terror that we were within two feet of the edge of the Rhine. Had the horses advanced one step more, we must have infallibly perished in the river, after braving so many dangers, and I, in particular, having escaped the Elster. I reached Cologne without further accident, and was thence ordered on to Wesel and Nimeguen.

My command, on the right of the line, was limited to Coblentz, but on the left extended to Arnheim. All our troops had recrossed the Rhine, and gone from Mayence to Wesel. This last place was strongly garrisoned, and General Bourke, the Governor, had orders to place all his troops at my disposal, but only to second my operations, without compromising the security of the place. This General behaved very well to me; we reconnoitred outside, and decided that it would be safe not to advance.

I went to Nimeguen, where I had been garrisoned, while serving under Maillebois, at the beginning of my career; I had had my quarters there after the siege during the winter of 1794-95. At that time we were victorious; at the period I am now describing we were only acting on a very feeble defensive.

I made certain that the enemy were gathering round Arnheim, which we held with only a small

force. The town was defended by a sort of entrenched camp, but there were no troops to occupy it. I decided upon evacuating the place, and upon recrossing the Leck and the Waal. I saw with my own eyes the enemy's preparations, and that we had not a moment to lose; orders were given, but very badly carried out. Instead of retiring during the night, they waited till the next day, and the enemy attacked at that very moment.

We had 400 or 500 men in the town, but neither collected together nor ready to leave. They were dispersed; the gate by which we were to quit was not even guarded, so much so that the gatekeeper, whether through bribery or treachery, locked it, disappeared with the keys, and ran away at the first gunshot. The detachment, therefore, had to capitulate. The troops from without crossed the bridge without destroying it, not knowing the reason why the garrison did not evacuate the town. The enemy seized the opportunity, and followed, but hesitatingly, half-way across. The very fact of the garrison being shut up within the place stopped the enemy's chief forces, as they thought it was much stronger than it really was; had it not been for that, they might have made it difficult for us to cross the Waal.

At Nimeguen there were two little armed Dutch boats. Fearing that they might commit

some fresh act of treachery, and prevent the return of our troops, I ordered them to move down the river at once, without giving them a chance of learning what had happened. I thus succeeded in bringing across, without inconvenience, all the detachments that were still on the right bank.

I had opened communications with General Molitor, who commanded in the Province of Utrecht. I recalled him, and he crossed to the island of Bommel, whence he joined me with some more broken remains. As I foresaw that we should ere long be compelled to withdraw from Nimeguen, I asked for permission to evacuate at the same time Bois-le-Duc, Wesel, Venloo, and Maestricht; but it was refused. While waiting for an answer to my despatch, I inquired of General Bourke how long he would require to undermine and blow up the fortifications of Wesel, and to withdraw his garrison, supposing his instructions authorized him to carry out such an order if given by me. The question was simple; but it caused him such terror that his only answer to me was a request for an interview, but the events which followed prevented me from complying with it.

In asking for an authorization to evacuate these places, I was carrying out the plan of concentration that I had twice proposed under similar circumstances at the end of 1812 and 1813; but, in

spite of the justice of my views, experience had taught no lesson, and the garrisons were compelled to capitulate one after another. However, as we could look for no immediate succour, this system served to reinforce our fighting troops, and to weaken the enemy, who were obliged to leave garrisons in the places we evacuated.

I know that the other system has its advantages —for example, that of paralyzing a larger number of hostile troops by sieges or blockades, and of securing resources and communications for one's self, if one can succeed in beating the enemy in the open field. But to obtain these advantages an army is a necessity; and when one has none, or nothing but a few shattered remains, and it takes months to raise a fresh one, it is better to have recourse to evacuation. This is especially the case when the places are scattered — like Zamosc, Modlin, Pillau, and Dantzic—if one is driven back to this side of the Elbe, and like those on the Oder and the Elbe when one has to retire to the Rhine. In my opinion, it is much better to run the risk of being obliged to recommence sieges, and to have a movable army, than to be reduced to mere bundles (*paquets*) of men, which have to end by giving way, as happened to us at the end of each of our last campaigns.*

* Besides the large force shut up in Hamburg under Marshal Davout (and which held out so gallantly even after the capitulation of Paris), the French had considerably over a hundred

I was told to stand firm; but with such an extended range as I had under my command, and with such small means, I could only watch the Rhine, and not defend it. The enemy tried to cross it at Düsseldorf, and surprised the little garrison of Neuss. I hastened thither, and on the way learned that it was only an attempt, and that the enemy had recrossed the river. They tried the same thing at several other points. All this was insignificant; but it served to warn me to act with circumspection, so as not to run the risk of being cut off.

I received no further orders, and the events which crowded upon me obliged me to act with prudence. I withdrew slowly to the Meuse, reinforcing Wesel, Venloo, and Maestricht, when I

thousand veterans and conscripts blockaded in fortresses, such as Dantzig, Zamosc, Modlin, Stettin, Pillau, Thorn, Glogau, Torgau, Cüstrin, Wittemburg, Magdeburg, Wurtzburg, Freibourg, Erfurt, with Marshal St. Cyr at Dresden, and in smaller garrisons in Austria, at Mayence or Coblentz possibly, at Strasbourg, Kehl, Colmar, Dijon, Besançon, Belfort, Luxembourg, Thionville, Metz, Phalsbourg, Saverne, Bitche, Toul, etc., St. Sebastian, Pampeluna, and in Catalonia, as well as at Antwerp, where, in the hour of adversity for France, instead of 'emigrating,' the stern Republican Carnot placed his sword at the disposal of the Emperor whose career he so highly disapproved of (a pleasant contrast to the many Frenchmen who, like Moreau or Dumouriez, stabbed their country in the back when they found its enemies in readiness to assist them). All these fortresses were taken or besieged; of course no reference is made here to the garrisons of the interior or even to Lyons, which was threatened.

learned that the enemy had opened the campaign, and definitely crossed the Rhine. They were advancing very rapidly, as they met no obstacles to speak of; they might reach Liège before me. I hastened thither, and thence to Huy, Namur, and Mezières.

CHAPTER VIII.

Campaign in France—Bombardment of Châlons—Escape from Épernay—Champaubert and Château-Thierry—Congress of Châtillon—Surprise at Troyes—Retreat of the Enemy—The Emperor at Arcis—Departure of the Emperor.

THE Emperor joined the army at the first announcement of the passage of the Rhine;* but of all the levies and reinforcements that had been announced with such a flourish, none ever reached me. On paper, I was supposed to be in command of a force numbering from 50,000 to 60,000 men, whereas, with Molitor's division, which I brought with me, I had not more than 3,000.

I was going to Verdun to join the Duke of Ragusa, who had the left of our line, when I received orders to come to Châlons, whence I was sent to Vitry on the Marne. A hostile force, 30,000 strong, was already in the neighbourhood. I rallied my troops at the *Chaussée*, where I was attacked, but very feebly, next morning. During the day, however, the enemy made preparations

* The allies crossed the Rhine on January 1, 1814; the Emperor did not leave Paris till the 25th.

to dislodge me. I held our position till night, when I withdrew to Châlons. The evacuation of this place had already begun, but it would take us at least twenty-four hours to finish emptying the magazines, which were so precious to us.

The enemy appeared at break of day, and deployed in turn all their forces, which I reckoned at 30,000 men. Prudence, no doubt, dictated to me not to fight on such unequal terms, and not to expose Châlons; but, despite our utmost activity, the emptying of the magazines could not be effected before the following night.

On the other hand, the General in command at Vitry, who had 2,000 or 2,500 men, sent me word that he was in a very critical position—without victuals or means of defence; that he was already invested on the right bank of the Marne, and that if he did not receive immediate orders to retire, he would be constrained to surrender, and that we should lose the garrison almost without striking a blow. I determined to send him the orders he asked for, and to protect his march on the way to join us. This was an additional reason for defending Châlons. My troops covered the town, and did, in fact, defend it very courageously till nightfall, when the firing ceased on either side.

General Yorck, who commanded at this point, had made up his mind to occupy the place; he summoned me to yield or to evacuate it, other-

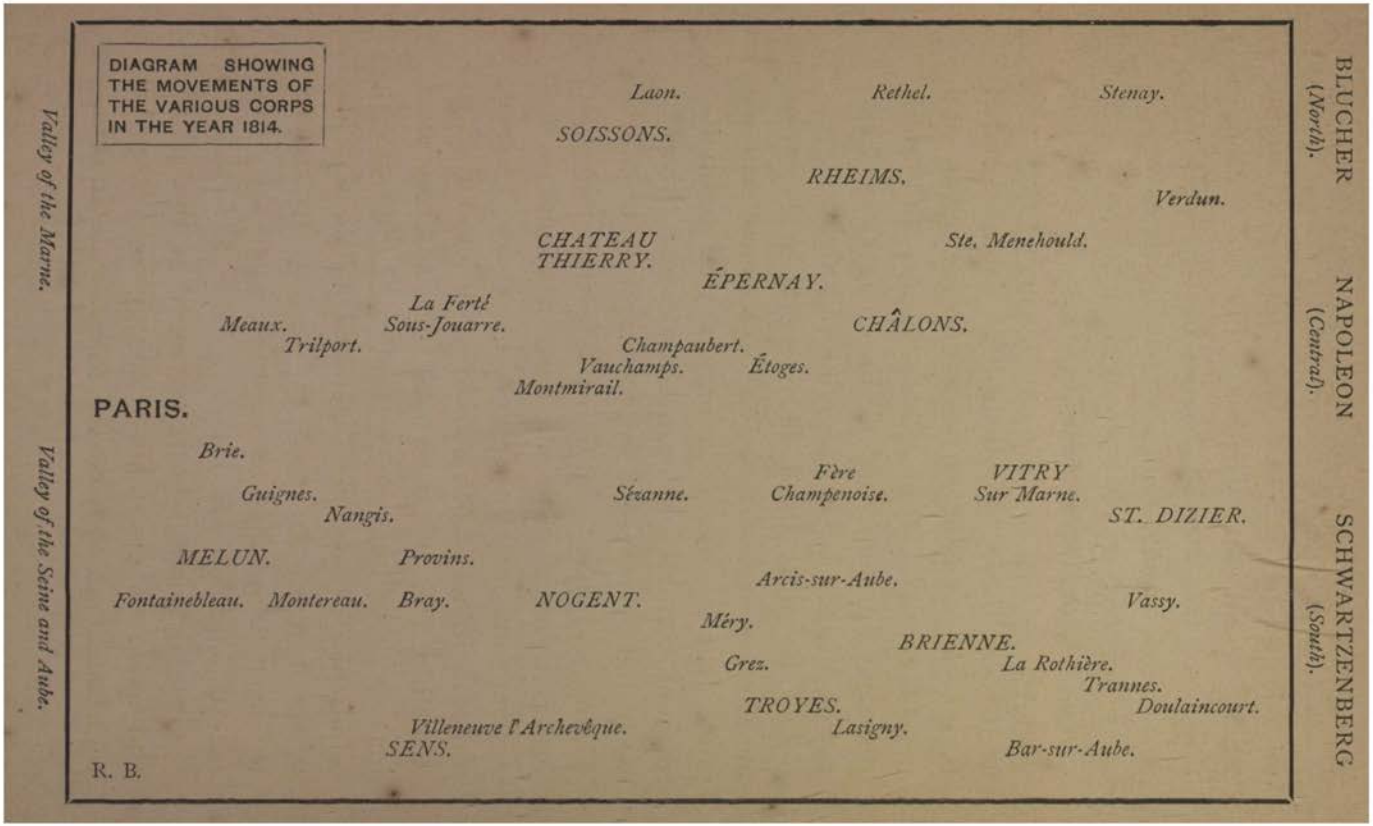


DIAGRAM SHOWING THE MOVEMENTS OF THE VARIOUS CORPS IN THE YEAR 1814.
Laon.
Rethel.
Stenay.
SOISSONS.
RHEIMS.
Verdun.
CHATEAU THIERRY.
Ste. Menehould.
ÉPERNAY.
La Ferté Sous-Jouarre.
Meaux.
Trilport.
CHÂLONS.
Champaubert.
Vauchamps.
Étoges.
Montmirail.
PARIS.
Brie.
Guignes.
Nangis.
Sézanne.
Fère Champenoise.
VITRY Sur Marne.
ST. DIZIER.
MELUN.
Provins.
Arcis-sur-Aube.
Fontainebleau.
Montereau.
Bray.
NOGENT.
Vassy.
Méry.
BRIENNE.
Grez.
La Rothière.
Trannes.
TROYES.
Doulaincourt.
Villeneuve l'Archevêque.
Lasigny.
SENS.
Bar-sur-Aube.
R. B.
Valley of the Marne.
Valley of the Seine and Aube.
BLUCHER (North).
NAPOLEON (Central).
SCHWARTZENBERG (South).

wise he would set it on fire. That would have been easily done, for many parts of the town are old, and the houses built of wood.

Owing to some misunderstanding, his *parlementaire* was admitted, although, according to my custom, I had renewed my prohibition, and was brought to me. He was a natural brother of the King of Prussia, the Count of Brandenburg, who in 1812 had arrived at Tilsit from Berlin a day or two before the defection of the Prussian corps. This corps was the very one that I had been fighting all day, and commanded by the same leader. I had hitherto always treated this young man with consideration and politeness; he showed a decided want of both to me in delivering his message.

'I have more respect for your character than you have yourself,' I said, 'otherwise I would cause you to regret your impertinent manner. I will not expose Châlons to the disorder attendant upon a night-occupation, but I do not mind telling you that I shall evacuate it to-morrow morning. Your General knows me well enough to be convinced that I shall not allow myself to be intimidated by threats any more than by deeds. That is all I have to say to you. Go.'

'We shall set fire to the town,' he replied.

'Do so,' I answered, and dismissed him.

On the previous day I had given orders that the bridge should be mined, as also a triumphal

arch that either gratitude or flattery had raised to the Emperor at its extremity, on the left bank of the Marne. It was not to be blown up except in case the mines failed—which happened—so as to obstruct the bridge, at least for artillery.

The threat of shelling the town was quickly put into execution, and immediately spread terror. I had made every preparation to extinguish the fire in the most exposed quarters. A few houses were set alight, and I then witnessed a heart-breaking spectacle, the authorities imploring me to evacuate the town, and part of the population running hither and thither half clothed, uttering cries of despair, and cursing the author of a war which had brought such desolation upon France, and to whom, all the same, they had recently erected a triumphal arch.

I groaned at this pitiful sight; but my duty would not admit of my yielding nor of compromising my troops and the general operations of the army. The night was very severe; it was freezing hard, and the poor creatures were half dressed. The women, their hair streaming and with bare feet, carried about their babies in long clothes. I shall never forget it. The enemy, observing that their fire produced no result, or perhaps for want of ammunition, ceased it, and the inhabitants retired to their homes.

I evacuated the place in broad daylight, after ordering a light to be set to the mines under the

bridge ; but they were badly laid, and only shook it. I then exploded those under the triumphal arch, and, when it had fallen, it made a sufficient obstacle to prevent an immediate entrance. The enemy, seeing us prepared to oppose any attempt, refrained from making one all that day.

My orders were to communicate with the Duke of Ragusa, who was supposed to be at Arcis-sur-Aube. I sent my cavalry there, but on the way they met that of the enemy, and fell back upon Étoges. The garrison of Vitry, which had retired unhindered, was already there. A portion of my corps accompanied me thither, while the rest made for Jaâlons. I thus covered the two main roads between Châlons and Paris. On reaching Champtrix, I learned from some prisoners and from the inhabitants that part of Blücher's army was advancing to Montmirail. As this communication, therefore, was closed to me, I went across country to Épernay, where all my troops re-assembled ; but as it was possible—nay, probable—that the enemy would reach La Ferté-sous-Jouarre before me, if I did not take rapid steps to prevent it, I made a forced march. I had halted and slept at Épernay, and, on continuing my route, left my rear-guard behind to impede the enemy when they quitted Châlons. The egress from Épernay is narrow, and may be defended for a considerable time.

I stopped at a village among the hills on the

left of the road; but scarcely was I settled there when I was told that my rear-guard, which, however, had not been pressed, was retreating, and that the enemy's scouts had already reached the village where I was breakfasting. I had but just time to throw myself across my horse and gallop through the vineyards to catch up my troops, who had marched on some distance. Had it not been for the peasant's timely warning, I should have been taken while at table. I escaped with nothing worse than the fright.

The General in command of the rear-guard had been frightened by false reports. I slackened his march, and made him face about each time the enemy seemed to come too close to us. We took up our position and rested for a few hours at Dormans, whence we continued our march towards Château-Thierry, which had already been passed by my front column. The important thing was to reach La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, where the two roads meet, and to pass the night there.

I learned, on arrival, that the Russian General Sacken was at Bussière. Had I been a few hours later I should have had to retreat to Château-Thierry and make for Soissons, which would have separated me from the army and have left Meaux uncovered, and from thence the enemy would have met with no obstacle till they reached Paris. My rear-guard still followed me. They had orders to destroy the bridge at Château-

Thierry, but it was badly done. My advance-guard took up their position at La Ferté, on the heights above the road to Montmirail, where they were soon after attacked. We skirmished all day upon a ground favourable to that kind of defence, which allowed time for my rear-guard to come up; they were somewhat pressed, and only passed through La Ferté. I did not know where the principal headquarters were, as I could obtain no answer to my frequent representations upon my situation. I lost ground towards the evening, and, fearing simultaneous attacks from the two corps that were debouching by the two roads, I recrossed the Marne next day at Trilport, where the bridge had been mined, in spite of the opposition attempted by the inhabitants.

I had strictly forbidden that the bridge should be blown up without my express orders, and, as I wished to be on the spot, I remained where I was and slept upon a heap of faggots piled up there to be embarked, instead of going on to Meaux.

Utterly fatigued and worn out, I had fallen asleep near a large fire, when I was suddenly startled by a violent detonation. Valazé, General of Engineers, who was beside me, ran to the scene of the explosion. It seemed as if we were predestined to misfortune. Owing to some misunderstanding, a match had been laid to the mines; some of them had not exploded, but the

bridge was so broken and shaken as to scarcely hold together, and it would have been too dangerous not to complete the work of destruction, the more so as a simple picket would now suffice to guard it, and as there was another bridge intact at Meaux.

I kept the Emperor carefully informed of my march, and of the circumstances that had brought me to this point. I also sent word to the King of Naples, who was commanding in Paris.

The alarm there was very great, and naturally so, for we were now only eleven leagues distant, and the great allied army was marching upon Nogent, Bray, and Montereau. The Emperor, informed by my despatches, made a very bold flank march, and, falling unexpectedly upon Blücher at Champaubert and Château-Thierry, gained a great victory.

I had received orders to direct my cavalry so as to assist these attacks, and, although it had to make a long round by Meaux, it arrived in time to take part in the success; then it was that I bitterly regretted the bridge at Trilport. Unfortunately these victories had no result save that of prolonging our agony; they raised the spirits of the men, but they thinned and weakened our ranks daily.

While these events were in progress on the Marne, the great army of the enemy had seized the three places mentioned above on the Seine.

It therefore became necessary to let go our hold, and hasten with all speed to cover Paris, re-assemble our scattered remnants, and give battle.

My troops were sent to a point between Brie-Comte-Robert and Guignes. While they were marching I rushed to Paris to put some business matters in order, little thinking that within a short space the capital would fall into the hands of the allies. I promptly rejoined. After the reassembly was made and the attack ordered I was sent to Bray, where I found the bridge destroyed: the battle was reduced to a sharp cannonade.

We were more fortunate at Montereau. The enemy had taken up a position on the right bank, where they were speedily attacked. One of our corps, repulsed at the first onset, was quickly supported by others who threw themselves forward gallantly, broke the enemy's ranks, and put them to flight. They recrossed the Seine in the utmost disorder, and were eagerly pursued, and I was sent for.

The allies retired beyond the Aube. On the way thither they sent *parlementaires* to propose an armistice. Generals were appointed on either side to treat. This armistice, the enemy stated, should be the preliminary of the peace that was being so slowly negotiated at Châlons. I know not whether either side were of good faith in this congress, but assuredly the allies were not.

Eug. Lami del. Blanchard sc.

NAPOLEON AT THE BATTLE OF MONTEREAU

Paris, for Richard Bentley and Son 1892

Printed by Ch. Wittmann Paris

Lusigny, between Troyes and Vendœuvre, had been decided upon for the settlement of the armistice. The allies have since declared that the territory between the Seine and the Aube had been neutralized while the articles of agreement were being drawn up; but, whether by a misunderstanding or bad faith, the Emperor ordered the Seine to be crossed at Troyes, and sent me to Châtillon.

The negotiators of the armistice, finding themselves surrounded by fire, broke up the conferences. The Congress at Châtillon was alarmed at my approach, and the Duke of Vicenza, the principal French representative at the Congress, sent to me imploring me not to advance; if I did, all the foreign ministers threatened to retire. I stopped, and the Emperor approved my compliance.

While we were marching towards Bar-sur-Aube, he was informed that Blücher's army, which he had beaten and routed at Champaubert and Château-Thierry, was retracing its steps. He started with all his reserves to fight them again, leaving orders with me, as the senior Marshal, to take command of the troops he left behind him (that is to say, those of the Marshal, Duke of Reggio, and of General Gérard, which were as weakened as my own), to cross the Seine in person, and put myself in line with these two corps on the Aube. I did this immediately.

I marched through a very difficult country near Essoyes, and took La Ferté; but while I was seeking to communicate with Bar-sur-Aube, where the Duke of Reggio ought to have been, some detachments of the enemy showed themselves at a short distance off, beyond the woods belonging to the ancient abbey of Clairvaux. I immediately concluded that the two corps had been compelled to retire from Bar, but yet I could hear no cannon which could force them to such a step. I hastily summoned the troops who had carried La Ferté, and, as my communications on the left with them were thus cut off, and knowing of no other place save Bar-sur-Seine at which I could cross the river, I made a forced march throughout the night. I only reached the place a quarter of an hour before the enemy's scouts. I at once sent news to Troyes, whither had gone the staff of the two corps.

Marshal Oudinot explained to me the position of affairs, and the reasons for his retreat. He pressed me, as I had the general command of the troops, to come and take my place more in the centre. I therefore continued my movement down the left bank of the Seine, and two days later reached Troyes.

For several days previously I had been unwell. On my arrival I was obliged to go to bed. The Marshal and General Gérard came to see me, and we agreed upon our plan. The first thing to be

done was to supply Troyes with the means of temporary defence, so as to give my corps time to come up. We settled that one of Gérard's corps should make as long a stand as possible within and without the town, the other being kept in reserve, and that the Marshal's corps should be posted on our side of the suburbs, where they should await the arrival of my troops, which were to come up early next day. The fear was that the enemy might cross the Seine at Méry, cut off the high road to Nogent, seize Bray and Montereau, and thus separate us from the Emperor. In that case we should have no road but that by Villeneuve-l'Archevêque and Sens.

I had betaken myself into the suburbs, the infantry of the two corps were placed as I have described; I was to follow them with mine. I was breakfasting quietly, when General Gressot, chief of Marshal Oudinot's staff, came to tell me that the Marshal's troops had just been placed in the position agreed upon. I had ordered a portion of the cavalry to follow the old route by Pavilion and Le Paraclet.

As we were starting to join the Marshal's force, an officer brought me intelligence that the enemy were just leaving Troyes, and that I had not an instant to lose; we were in a road running into the highway. I replied that such a thing was impossible, as there was one division within and

without the town, another in the rear, and the Marshal's force in reserve.

'They are all gone,' answered the officer.

All gone, and I had never been told of it!

Ill as I was, I jumped on my horse, when I saw the enemy's scouts. I dashed at them with my aides-de-camp and my escort, and we drove them back towards the town. Meanwhile, my carriages started at full gallop, and reached the high road. I rejoined General Gérard, who was continuing his retreat, by order, as he told me, of the Marshal, who was far on ahead. He had not remained in position, although General Gressot told me that he had placed his troops according to our agreement. Ten minutes later my communications were cut off.

We marched all day, skirmishing as we went. The cavalry had one brush. We were so far ahead that the enemy could not engage us in a very unequal combat. That evening we made our quarters at Grez and Granges. At the latter place I found Marshal Oudinot, and inquired why he had quitted his post that morning. He replied that the Young Guard was not intended for a rear-guard.

'If that be so,' said I, 'I have no further orders for you. Go to the Emperor for them.'

I continued retreating. Next day we reoccupied our positions on the Seine at Nogent, Bray, and Montereau, to defend those points

where the river might be crossed. But the enemy traversed it below our left wing, and it then became necessary to change our direction, and march perpendicularly to the river. They deployed before us, made a severe attack on our left, commanded by the Duke of Reggio, and drove us back upon Provins. We held good all day, but not without loss, crossed the ravines, the narrow defiles, and the town, and took up our position in the rear. Our situation was very critical, and we had no news from the Emperor, though not because we had not sent him warnings. The enemy made no attempt next day; this inactivity did not seem natural, and I ordered all my cavalry to be in readiness to make a general reconnaissance the following day. The enemy had only left some feeble detachments to observe us, and were beating a hasty retreat.

On hearing this I quitted the Maison Rouge, where I was quartered, with the Duke of Reggio, in order to follow their tracks. It was clear that this retreat, with forces very superior to ours, could only have been occasioned by a flank movement made by the Emperor. In fact, while we were on the road, I received orders to march with my full force in the direction of Arcis-sur-Aube. The Duke of Reggio made a forced march to attain the point mentioned. I hastened in front of my troops to reach Arcis, but on the way I came upon a marsh, of which the ford had been

spoiled and rendered useless by the transit of some heavy material. I ordered a search to be made for another, which caused considerable delay. While continuing my journey, I perceived afar off, on the left of the Aube, all the enemy's forces drawn up in squares, motionless, and my troops drawing away towards Vitry-sur-Marne. Much surprised at this movement, I pressed my horse to learn the reason; I found the Emperor in the public square at Arcis near a camp-fire.

'What is your motive,' I inquired, 'for withdrawing your troops from here?'

'The enemy are retreating rapidly,' he replied, 'and I am cutting off their communications. We have got them now, and they shall pay dearly for their temerity. I have summoned the heavy artillery to Sézanne to follow my movement to Vitry, and have issued orders to our detachments at Nogent, Bray, and Montereau, to go thither by forced marches.'

These detachments were commanded by General Pacthod; the artillery and waggons of my army corps were protected by them.

'What!' I exclaimed, 'the enemy retreating? They are in position on the other side. I myself saw them in considerable force. They also can discern your retrograde movement, and if they attack you here, how will you resist them?'

'They would not dare to do so; their only idea is to get across the Rhine, and if they be still

there it is simply in order to let all their baggage-waggons pass. Besides, I have sent the Duke of Reggio and the cavalry against them, with orders to mask my movement, and to prevent the enemy from observing it.'

'How is that possible?' I inquired. 'The town is in a hollow; the Aube runs between two hills; the enemy are on one, and your troops are climbing the other.'

'Never mind,' said he; 'when will your force arrive?'

'Very late to-night.'

'Very good. You will support the Duke of Reggio, who will continue to act under your orders.'

He told the Major-General to draw up my instructions.

While the latter was dictating them, Marshal Ney, who had been to observe the enemy, entered.

'What are they doing?' asked the Emperor.

'They are not stirring from their position, and do not look at all as if they meant to attack.'

After a little more conversation Colonel Galbois, of the general staff, galloped up to us at the top of his speed, and in a terrified manner informed us that the enemy were advancing towards us.

'That is impossible,' said the Emperor.

At the same moment we heard the guns.

'Duke of Tarentum,' said the Emperor, 'mount your horse, and go and reconnoitre.'

I found the Duke of Reggio very uneasy; his position was indeed most critical.

'Hasten to the Emperor, I beg you,' he said; 'he must come to my help, otherwise I am done for.'

'Do not expect any help,' I replied; 'all his troops are on the way to Vitry. He is convinced that the enemy are retreating.'

We were still concealed by a slope.

'Let us see,' said I, 'what is threatening us on the other side.'

The Marshal's cavalry quickly descended; I thought they were too much exposed. They would have done better had they been posted on the slope towards Arcis, with vedettes on the edge. Had that been done, the enemy would not have been able to gauge their force.

On reaching the top we found ourselves face to face with the enemy's scouts. We hastily turned, but I had just time to glance at our foes and to see that the allies were resolutely marching towards us.

'Hasten,' said the Duke of Reggio—'hasten to Arcis.'

'When I have got past your troops,' I said, 'for the sight of me galloping to the rear might intimidate and perhaps scatter them. You have three bridges,' I added, 'one on each side of you,

and one in the middle of the town ; have them watched at once.'

I quitted him, riding slowly. As soon, however, as I had passed his lines, I set spurs to my horse and rode to Arcis ; the Emperor was no longer there. He had mounted his horse and followed his troops to Vitry. An officer belonging to the general staff was waiting to obtain news from me, and with orders to me to remain at Arcis till further notice.

CHAPTER IX.

Battle of Arcis—On the Marne—Battle of Saint Dizier—Before Vitry—An Unlucky Misprint—Return towards Paris—The Approaching End.

THE Duke of Reggio's troops, closely pressed, were retreating in disorder; the danger was that the enemy might take advantage of the confusion to cross the river; they were already on the bridge. The Marshal had a division in reserve; I pressed him to order it up. It was of the utmost importance to us to retake the bridge, which was severely contested. We reconquered it, and at length set to work to blow it up. Night had fallen. My troops had arrived; they were posted at every point, but still we were not without uneasiness as to the possibility of a nocturnal attack.

An officer came from headquarters to ask for news, and to bring me orders to hold firm for two or three days. The Emperor's illusion regarding the retreat of the allies was not yet dissipated.

When morning dawned, we saw the enemy

quietly in their positions. They remained thus all day, but towards evening they began to move apparently in the direction of Vitry. I immediately sent forward a division to forestall them, stop their movement, and protect mine. All our troops had orders to follow, a portion only of my cavalry remaining behind to check for as long as possible any troops which might debouch from Arcis.

From the road that we followed we were able to watch the enemy's march; we hastened to pass a nasty-looking defile. The following day was spent in skirmishing; but, as I foresaw a serious attack for the evening, I drew up my infantry in a favourable position, not far from the point where the enemy would cross the Marne. The artillery covered them; my cavalry, which formed the rear-guard, received orders to retire if the enemy showed any disposition to charge, and to come and draw up behind my line, so as not to mask their fire.

While making these arrangements I was very uneasy, for, behind my left, I saw the principal allied forces marching along the Marne, and I feared that they would reach the ford before the division I had sent there; that was my only communication with the Emperor. The latter still retained his opinion as to the enemy's retreat. All these demonstrations, he insisted, were merely feints to deceive us the more thoroughly as to

their veritable intentions of gaining the Rhine. He therefore continued his movement towards Saint Dizier and Vassy. As to myself, I was followed, and, on the rear of my right wing, Vitry was occupied by the enemy.

The two sides met close by the ford over the river Marne. The allies were happily repulsed by the French division, and, as night was drawing on, they did not think well to engage on that side, and left us masters of a point the importance of which had perhaps escaped them.

Events occurred upon my front exactly as I had foreseen them. The enemy had been reinforced, and now charged my cavalry, which came, at full gallop and very hotly followed, to take up the place that had been assigned to them. Scarcely was my line unmasked when the adversaries received a volley of grapeshot and musketry which threw them into the utmost disorder, and drove them off for the night.

We spent that night in crossing the river upon a miserable raft that we afterwards destroyed. Next morning found us drawn up in battle array upon the right bank, without having been disturbed either by the garrison of Vitry, or by the troops that we had checked on the previous day. They deployed before us; the river ran between us, and they were out of range. If, on the previous day, the enemy, who had large forces, had marched boldly, it would have been all over

with us, or, at least, with our communications with the Emperor. These were unfortunately cut off for all who had been left behind, and who were to have reunited at Sézanne. I had made sure that this convoy had not passed before us; I had even noticed, as I came along towards the defile I had traversed the day before, cannons and carriages abandoned, evident proofs that either a combat, a surprise, or an alarm had occurred there. Having no horses that could draw it, I was unable to move all this material, which could not belong to the heavy artillery; moreover, I did not know whether any fresh orders had been given since those for the junction at Sézanne.

While we were facing the enemy I noticed that they were sending troops on towards Vitry, where they would have no difficulty in crossing the Marne.

I received at this very moment orders to send my cavalry to Saint Dizier, and shortly afterwards fresh instructions to follow with all my troops. As the Emperor had started thence for Vassy, I received fresh orders to cross the Marne, which I did next day without having been disturbed since the morning of the preceding day. I was instructed to take up a position between the Marne and Vassy.

We had just established ourselves, when I received warning, and soon afterwards saw that

the allied cavalry was debouching from various directions. I sent word to the Emperor, who ordered me to advance while he came up in person. He collected all the cavalry that was available, and, going before us, deployed on the other side of the Marne in the plains of Saint Dizier.

The enemy had but few infantry, but they had collected at this point about 10,000 cavalry, with a proportionate amount of light artillery. The question was whether this cavalry was covering the army, and if not, what had become of it. The shock was long and severe. As my artillery was placed upon the heights beneath which flows the Marne, I commanded the battle-field. Never since the beginning of the war had I had an opportunity of seeing so many cavalry engaged. At length the enemy were broken and put to flight, losing 3,000 horses with all their artillery; we pursued them for some distance.

We arrived before Vitry next day, and had the melancholy proof that the main army of the allies was no longer there; what could have become of it? It was not difficult to guess, for as it had not followed us, and had left a strong garrison in the town, it was clear that it had faced about and was marching unopposed to Paris.

We had marched through pouring rain, which had scarcely ceased; the men were utterly exhausted, the ground so soaked that we could

move neither cavalry nor artillery. The Emperor said to me :

'Storm the town.'

'What!' I exclaimed, 'in the present condition of the troops? Do you not see how large the garrison is on the ramparts? I grant the ramparts are only made of earth, but they are strengthened with *fraises** and palisaded, and the fosses are full of water; how are we to cross them?'

'Send to collect some bundles of straw and throw them in,' answered the Emperor.

'Where are we to get them from? There is nothing in the surrounding villages. And, besides, can we make a solid bridge with a few bundles of straw? Moreover, can you have any hope of success if you attempt such a *coup de main* with men in the condition of mine?'

As he insisted, I dryly said :

'Try it, sire, with your own Guard if you will; my men are not in a fit condition now;' and left him.

He sent out a reconnoitring party, and their reports convinced him of the impossibility of the enterprise.

A little bulletin printed by the enemy was brought to me, giving a detailed account of the seizure of the great convoy of artillery that had been collected at Sézanne, and of all the escort,

* Fraises—rows of stakes projecting horizontally from the escarp to prevent escalade. Palisades are upright.

who had been made prisoners, after a brave defence, at Fère-Champenoise, where the encounter had taken place. It included the names of the generals, and of the commissioned and non-commissioned officers. I saw the names of all those belonging to my corps. I took this sheet to the Major-General, and begged him to let the Emperor see it at once.

'That I will not,' replied he; 'the news is too bad. Take it to him yourself.'

'No,' said I; 'you are our intermediary; it is your business.'

We argued the point with considerable warmth; but as I reflected that the knowledge of these events could not fail to alter the Emperor's plans, and that there was no time to be lost, I took the bulletin to him myself.

He was alone near a camp fire.

'You look very much disturbed,' he said. 'What is the matter?'

'Read this,' I answered, handing him the paper.

He read it and smiled.

'It is not true,' he said. 'That is what the allies always do.'

'Not true!' I cried; 'but all the circumstances are detailed. I recognise all the names and appointments; our heavy artillery ought to be just about Fère-Champenoise now.'

'What day of the month is this?'

'The twenty-seventh of March.'

The battle had taken place the previous day.

'Look here,' said the Emperor, 'this is dated the 29th, which will only be the day after to-morrow!'

For an instant I was nonplussed; I had not noticed the date.

'That must be a mistake,' I said; 'this unfortunate affair must have taken place yesterday at the spot mentioned.'

I took up the printed sheet again, and returned to the Major-General's bivouac, where I found his officers and the Emperor's aides-de-camp.

'Well, what did the Emperor say?'

'He does not believe this bulletin is authentic.'

'Will you allow me to look at it?' asked General Drouot, of the Artillery. He examined it, and continued: 'You are only too right, Monsieur le Maréchal. It is a misprint; this is a 6 turned tail downwards.'

I went with this explanation to the Emperor, who made no remark but:

'The devil! That alters matters.'

He walked up and down for a few moments, and then said:

'So you don't think we can carry Vitry by main force?'

'I thought,' was my reply, 'that you were convinced of it.'

'Quite true,' he answered. 'Very well, let us go away!'

'Where will you go?'

'I don't know yet; but for the present to Saint Dizier. Remain here,' he added; 'act as the rear-guard; check the enemy; prevent them from leaving the town. I will send you some orders; I am sure to get news at Saint Dizier.'

'Whatever it may be,' I replied, 'Paris, left without defence, will have fallen before you can get there, if you are going thither, that is, and however fast you may travel. Were I in your place, I would go into Lorraine and Alsace, collect the garrisons from there, and declare war to the knife upon the enemy's rear, cutting off their communications, intercepting their convoys and reinforcements. They would be compelled to retreat, and you would be supported by our strongholds.'

'I have already ordered General Durutte to collect 10,000 men round Metz,' he said; 'but before deciding upon anything I must have reports.'

He started. That night I received orders to retire to Saint Dizier, and there found fresh ones to follow the Emperor, who had gone in the direction of Vassy, Doulaincourt, and Troyes, so the plan of throwing himself into Alsace and Lorraine had clearly been abandoned.

CHAPTER X.

Fall of Paris—Feeling in the Army—Scene at Fontainebleau—Beurnonville's Letter—Abdication of the Emperor—Nomination of the Commissioners—The Duke of Ragusa—At Petit-Bourg.

I AM now drawing to the close of this hopeless struggle. Our long political and military agony was to be finished by a thunderclap. A new order of things is now about to begin, under which you, my son, were born, and under which we are still living—the reign of the Bourbons.

This ancient race, having been turned off the throne, its head having fallen a victim to the Revolution, its family having since then wandered abroad, tried by means of proclamations scattered broadcast to regain its lost ground. No soldier was seduced, but its partisans took heart, first at Nancy, whither the Comte d'Artois, now on the throne, had ventured to betake himself; then at Paris, where some displayed determination, after the city had capitulated, however.

I followed the Emperor's steps. I had arrived

somewhere between Troyes and Villeneuve-l'Archevêque, when an order reached me to halt wheresoever I might be. In a postscript I read these words :

'*You are doubtless aware that the enemy are masters of Paris.*'

Although we had expected this grievous catastrophe, it affected us the more as we thought that the enemy might take revenge for the burning of Moscow, which, however, had not been caused by us, notwithstanding the rumour that had been spread at the time, and which still gained credence. Paris contained all that I held dearest in the world — children, relations, connections, family, friends, and what little I possessed, with the exception of this property where I am writing these lines.

The Emperor had preceded the remains of his army. When within a few leagues of Paris, where he contemplated making the last efforts to delay the enemy, where he intended to wait for us, and at least to succumb with honour—within a few leagues of Paris, I say, he heard of its surrender. I thought that he would have retreated with us, and have fallen back upon our strongholds ; instead of that, he summoned us to join him by forced marches.

The news of the loss of the capital spread rapidly, and occasioned much discouragement. Many soldiers left their flags, and retired to their

own homes. Although we were in our own country, we wanted for everything; we lived upon what we could pick up by marauding.

Discouragement seized some of our generals. One of them even refused to charge the enemy, who were harassing our rear-guard, and in the hearing of his troops cried:

'Damn it, let us have peace!'

(A year later he got himself into trouble, was arrested, and only saved by the events of March 20. He was either banished or made his escape, and eventually died mad in a lunatic asylum.)

A rumour spread that the Emperor had summoned us to Paris, in order to try to reconquer the capital. I myself received very direct and confidential news of this. I was implored to go in person to headquarters, in order to try to induce the Emperor to make peace, not to compromise what remained of France and the army, even to abdicate in favour of his son; that would be the best means of making peace between France and the foreigners.

The Emperor could not help being aware of these feelings, any more than of the general discontent that he had raised. As he might have taken it amiss if I left my troops without orders, and might have suspected a plot, I refused to go, and reserved my explanation until we should reach our destination. We were in ignorance as to what had been passing in Paris since its

occupation by the allies, and the Emperor was no better informed than we were. We talked over our position—that is to say, over the army and its future, the misfortunes that had befallen France through the obstinacy of a single man. The past overwhelmed, the present was not calculated to reassure us.

On the last day of our march, just as we were mounting our horses, General Gérard, accompanied by several others, came to me in the name of his troops. I cannot now remember whether the Marshal Duke of Reggio was with me. Gérard was spokesman; he pointed out to me the condition of affairs: that everyone was tired of it; that our misfortunes were heavy enough already, without an attempt being made to aggravate them by a foolhardy resistance, which would only expose Paris to the fate of Moscow if we attempted to drive out the enemy, as was currently reported; that he and his men were in nowise disposed to advance towards fresh disasters. I replied that I agreed with them, which was quite true, and that I would freely express my opinion to the Emperor.

'In that case,' they cried, 'count upon us. You are our chief; we will obey.'

We started and reached Fontainebleau. Great excitement reigned among the officers; they crowded into my quarters, begging me to go at once to the Emperor, to speak to him in the

name of the army, and tell him that they had had enough of it, and that it must cease. I promised to do all in my power, and begged them to leave me for a few moments.

While I was dressing an aide-de-camp came from the Duke of Ragusa, bearing a letter from my intimate friend General Beurnonville. This letter was addressed to me, to the Duke of Ragusa, and to the other Marshals. One of the officers read it aloud while I went on with my toilette. The seal had been broken by the Duke of Ragusa, who commanded our outposts.

Beurnonville was a member of the Provisional Government. He praised Marshals Mortier and Marmont, and their troops, who had fought bravely in defence of Paris; he spoke of the magnanimity of the allies, of the Emperor of Russia in particular, adding that they would no longer treat with Napoleon, that we were to have the English Constitution, that the Senate was going to set to work, etc.

As soon as I was ready I took the letter, and the Duke of Reggio, several other generals, and I went to the castle. In spite of our entreaties, we were all followed by our staffs. They feared lest the Emperor, warned of our visit, should make up his mind to lay a trap for us.

'The times are changed,' I said; 'he would venture it the less that the army is with us.'

The feeling among the Guard even was the

same; they shared the discontent of the army at the disasters that the Emperor had brought upon France. However, our officers insisted upon following us to defend us if necessary. Many others, of all ranks, in the courtyard and within the apartments, shared the same feelings; all displayed impatience to have an end put to their anxiety. There certainly was a plan to march upon Paris, but no one seemed disposed for it.

As soon as we were announced, the Duke of Reggio and I were shown into the study, where the Emperor was with the Dukes of Bassano (Maret) and Vicenza (Caulaincourt), the Prince of the Moskowa (Ney), the Prince of Neuchâtel (Berthier), Marshal Lefebvre, and others, whom I have now forgotten. This was the beginning of the scene that changed so many destinies.

The Emperor approached me:

'Good-day, Duke of Tarentum; how are you?'

'Very sad,' I replied; 'so many unfortunate events! a surrender without honour! no effort made to save Paris! We are all overwhelmed and humiliated!'

'Certainly it is a great misfortune; what do your troops say?'

'That you have summoned us to march upon the capital. They share our grief, and I come now to declare to you that they will not expose Paris to the fate of Moscow. We think we have done enough, have given sufficient proof of our

earnest desire to save France from the calamities that are now crowding upon her, without risking an attempt which would be more than unequal, and which can only end in losing everything. The troops are dying of hunger in the midst of their own country, reduced in number though they are by the disastrous events of the campaign, by privation, sickness, and, I must add, by discouragement. Since the occupation of the capital a large number of soldiers have retired to their own homes, and the remainder cannot find enough to live upon in the forest of Fontainebleau. If they advance they will find themselves in an open plain; our cavalry is weakened and exhausted; our horses can go no further; we have not enough ammunition for one skirmish, and no means of procuring more. If we fail, moreover, as we most probably shall, what remains of us will be destroyed, and the whole of France will be at the mercy of the enemy. We can still impose upon them; let us retain our attitude. Our mind is made up; whatever decision may be arrived at, we are determined to have no more to do with it. For my own part, I declare to you that my sword shall never be drawn against Frenchmen, nor dyed with French blood. Whatever may be decided upon, we have had enough of this unlucky war without kindling civil war.'

'No one intends to march upon Paris,' said the Emperor.

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I had expected him to burst into a violent rage, but his answer was given in a calm, mild voice. He repeated:

'The loss of Paris is a great misfortune.'

'Do you know,' said I, 'what is going on there?'

'They say that the allies will not treat with me.'

'Is that all you have heard?'

'Yes.'

'Read this.'

I handed him Beurnonville's letter, and continued:

'You will see from it exactly what measures are being taken, as it is written by one of the members of the Provisional Government.'

'May I read it aloud?' asked the Emperor.

'Certainly,' I answered; 'it has already been made public in my room. You will see from the address that it was not sent to me alone. The Duke of Ragusa forwarded it to me open by an aide-de-camp.'

The Emperor gave it to the Duke of Bassano, who read it aloud. When he had finished, the Emperor took it from him, and restored it to me, thanking me for the mark of confidence.

'You should never have had any doubt of it,' I answered.

'Quite true; I was wrong. You are a good and honourable man.'

'The important thing is to make up your mind,

sire; opinion is strengthening, and there is no time to be lost.'

He turned to all who were present, and said:

'Very good, gentlemen; since it must be so, I will abdicate. I have tried to bring happiness to France; I have not succeeded; events have been against me. I do not wish to increase our sufferings. But when I abdicate, what will you do? Will you accept the King of Rome as my successor, and the Empress as Regent?'

We all accepted unanimously.

'The first thing to be done,' he added, 'is to treat for a suspension of arms, and I shall send commissioners to Paris. I nominate for this important mission the Marshals Prince of the Moskowa and Duke of Ragusa, and the Duke of Vicenza. Does this selection satisfy you?'

We replied in the affirmative.

He drew up the act of abdication, but changed the wording two or three times over. It is not, however, very clear in my memory whether this was done precisely at that moment; I think it was, but will not affirm it.

The allies having come to the determination not to treat any further with the Emperor, the commissioners, who had just been nominated and approved, became less his representatives than those of the army, and it was in the name of the latter that they were to act. The Emperor said:

'Gentlemen, you may now retire. I am going to give directions relative to the instructions for the commissioners, but I forbid them to make stipulations respecting anything personal to me.'

Then, throwing himself on a sofa, and striking his thigh with his hand, he continued:

'Nonsense, gentlemen! let us leave all that alone, and march to-morrow. We shall beat them!'

I repeated to him briefly all that I had just said concerning the position of the army.

'No,' we all added, 'we have had enough of it; and remember that every hour that passes tells against the success of the mission that the envoys have to carry out.'

He did not insist, and said: 'Be ready to start at four o'clock,' and then dismissed us.

It was clear that he was only yielding to necessity, that his idea in summoning us so precipitately to Fontainebleau had been to order an immediate advance against Paris, as rumour had stated, and that he had not abandoned it, as a minute previously he had said:

'Nonsense, gentlemen! let us leave all that alone, and march to-morrow. We shall beat them!'

Those words were to us a warning to take measures. After leaving his presence, we agreed that all authority should be placed in the hands of the commissioners, that no step should be

taken except under their direction until the conclusion of a treaty, and that the command of the army should be given to the Major-General, as the senior, but with a promise from him to carry out no orders of the Emperor, of whatever nature, but only such as should be agreed upon by the commissioners, and giving immediate notice thereof to the different corps. He accepted the command, and made the promise.

The news of what had just occurred spread rapidly, and caused great joy. Everyone was relieved of a great anxiety, and breathed prayers for the success of the proposed mission.

Scarcely had we reached the gallery, on leaving the Emperor, when he sent the Duke of Vicenza to recall me. We stopped, and I returned to him.

'I have changed my mind regarding Marshal Marmont,' said he; 'he is commanding the outposts, and may be of use at Essonne. I wish you to take his place as commissioner. Will you accept?'

'Yes,' I answered; 'and you may rely upon my doing all in my power.'

'I know it,' he said; 'you are a man of honour, and I trust in your loyalty.'

'But,' I continued, 'you must give the Marshals notice of this change.'

He told Caulaincourt to do so. On our way to where we had left the others in the gallery the

latter told me that scarcely had we left the Emperor's presence when he said :

'Why did not Marshal Macdonald send me Beurnonville's letter by a courier?'

'That is part of your distrust of him,' the Duke of Vicenza had answered; 'we all know that he had received it an instant before coming to you with the Duke of Reggio, and that it had been read aloud after being opened by the Duke of Ragusa.'

'That makes a difference,' the Emperor had answered, adding presently: 'It seems to me advisable for the Duke of Ragusa to remain at Essonne; I wish Macdonald to replace him. Call him back.'

Thus it came about that I was summoned to play a part in this great drama of the fall of the Empire, and of the colossus that had for so long weighed upon Europe, which had at length armed herself to overturn it!

On rejoining our comrades we informed them of the change that had taken place; they thought the Emperor had already made fresh plans. We insisted then more strongly than ever upon the obligation undertaken by the Major-General, and agreed to, moreover, by the Emperor—to wit, that he should do nothing except on the initiative and by direction of the commissioners.

We returned once more to the castle for our instructions. The Emperor read them to us.

He had had the clause inserted which forbade our making any stipulation concerning him personally; then he gave his deed of abdication to the Duke of Vicenza, and we started for Paris accompanied by the prayers of the army for the success of our negotiations.

The Duke of Ragusa's aide-de-camp had preceded us to Essonne; he had informed the Marshal of what had passed at the castle, and of the immediate arrival of the commissioners, amongst whom he had at first been appointed. He did not know that I had been nominated in his place. We found him in great agitation, complaining that he had not been summoned to the meeting, an omission which we explained to him had been quite accidental. We asked him to send a messenger to beg for a safe conduct for us, so that we might reach the Emperor of Russia.

While we were awaiting the messenger's return, the Duke of Ragusa insinuated to us that he had received overtures from the allies to dissociate himself from the Emperor's cause with his army corps, and that he had replied by counter-propositions. He feared lest every moment should bring him word that they were accepted. I regret to say that they had been already accepted, which was proved by later avowals and by events that shortly occurred. He had made them in concert with his principal generals.

This story is painful to me, because it appears

to lay a heavy charge upon the Duke of Ragusa, with whom my relations have since been friendly. I only mention it here in order to explain the part I played in the mission in which I was employed. Moreover, it is only for you, my son, although all the circumstances have been made public, and have called down much animadversion upon the poor Duke, which, added to other domestic sorrows, has made him very unhappy.

Our surprise, on learning from Marshal Marmont how far he had gone in his private negotiations, may be imagined. We pointed out to him his imprudence, and the grave consequences that might ensue for France and the army, which, by such a step, would be placed at the enemy's mercy. But 'first get me out of the difficulty, and lecture me afterwards.' Every representation or observation was now unnecessary. The first thing to be done was to prevent this breach, and retard as long as possible the effect of the proposals made by the Duke of Ragusa. These had been already accepted, and this fact he concealed from us, or from me, at any rate, so upset and anxious was he about the whole matter.

One of us advised him to go to Fontainebleau, promising that we would keep the enemy's messenger by telling him that the Marshal had been summoned suddenly by the Emperor, and that he had to obey. This would only appear natural. Then, as it was unlikely that the Emperor of

Russia would refuse to receive us, and to treat for a suspension of arms first of all, we would secure the inclusion of his troops. He refused, however, fearing that the Emperor might receive news of his private negotiation, and order his arrest and trial.

The Duke of Vicenza thought of and proposed another plan, which was to take the Duke of Ragusa with us, remarking that if our deed of nomination were not asked for, he would be supposed to be one of us; and in the contrary event we would say that we had added him. This settled, the Duke ordered General Souham, to whom he made over the temporary command of the troops, not to stir, whatever news he received, until his own return, which would take place at an early hour next day.

We were now warned that we might pass the allied outposts. We entered our carriages, Marshal Ney with the Duke of Vicenza, and the Duke of Ragusa with me. On reaching the castle of Petit-Bourg he observed that we were being driven up the avenue; he started.

'What objection have you?' I asked.

'It is,' he replied, 'the headquarters of the allies' advance-guard, commanded by the Crown Prince of Wurtemberg.'

'Well, what of that?'

'It is with him that I made my bargain, and supposing he requires its execution?'

'If that be so, stay in the carriage; as soon as we stop I will tell the two other commissioners,' which I did.

The Generalissimo Prince Schwarzenberg came to meet us and led us to the Crown Prince, who received us very dryly, telling us bitterly that we had caused the misfortunes of all Europe, which was true enough; but the reproach was the more out of place in his mouth, as he, like his father, was one day to profit by these said misfortunes, which brought him the title of King and the aggrandisement of the Grand Duchy of Wurtemberg after it had been raised to a kingdom. Though we did not tell him this plainly, we let him see that we thought it. He quitted the room with every mark of temper and annoyance, and did not reappear.

CHAPTER XI.

Prince Schwarzenberg—Arrival of the Commissioners in Paris —Reception by the Emperor Alexander—The Commissioners' Proposals — The Provisional Government — A Lamentable Defection — The Regency Negatived — Decision of the Allies—Return to Fontainebleau.

We all knew the Generalissimo; he had been Ambassador from his Court to the Emperor, of whom he had formerly been the very humble servant and courtier. It was he who, in 1810, had taken the most pains to bring about the rupture of the marriage-negotiations with Russia, and to play the principal part in making the Emperor marry the Archduchess, by letting it be known secretly that he had plenary powers to accept proposals, which were eventually made.

Astonished at finding the Generalissimo at his outposts, and concluding that he intended to attack us, I expressed my surprise at finding him there, adding that if his intentions were hostile, we trusted to his honour to tell us so, in order that we might break off our mission and return to our posts. He replied by protesting that he

had merely come to Petit-Bourg to pay his respects to the Crown Prince. He added that he had but just arrived when our messenger came to ask for a safe conduct for us, and that he had taken upon himself to receive us at the headquarters of his advance-guard. We could not go on to Paris without permission from the Emperor of Russia, he said, but he had sent to let him know of our arrival, and was sure that his answer would arrive ere long. He was very polite to us, and our conversation naturally turned upon passing events and the object of our mission. We expected to find in him a strong partisan for the right of the King of Rome to succeed his father, and for the regency of the Empress. We were soon undeceived by hearing the Prince pronounce himself warmly in favour of the general cause of the allies as against the private interests of the House of Austria. His language was certainly that held at his Court, but it was impossible to believe that the Emperor Francis would sacrifice his daughter in this catastrophe, and help in precipitating her from the throne that he had so eagerly assisted her to mount. It appeared to us the less likely, as it was said that this Archduchess was his favourite daughter.

During this conversation someone came and called the Prince; he left us, and returned a quarter of an hour later, accompanied by the Duke of Ragusa. As the latter observed our

surprise, he came to me in an off-hand manner, smiling, and as though relieved of a great weight. He told us that, having, without making himself known, discovered who were in the castle, he had learned that the Generalissimo had preceded us, and that the Crown Prince had just retired to his own apartments. It then occurred to him to ask for Prince Schwarzenberg, and he begged him to allow their convention to have no sequel, as we, his comrades, were come to treat for the whole army inclusively, but on avowable and very different bases. To this the Generalissimo had consented without difficulty. Had all things passed in this manner our discretion would have thrown an impenetrable veil over this fault; the destiny of the Duke of Ragusa had decided it otherwise.

The conversation, or, to express it better, the discussion, upon the subject of the rights of the King of Rome, recommenced with even more warmth, and with no less resistance on the part of the Generalissimo. His servants rescued him from his difficulty by announcing that supper was ready; it was between ten and eleven o'clock at night, and he told us that he had not dined. He invited us to share his supper, but we took no part in this German meal, for the reason that we had dined at Essonne a few hours previously. Supper was silent and melancholy; everyone kept his eyes on his plate; we observed

each other. On rising from table we were informed that the Emperor of Russia was expecting us in Paris. The Generalissimo came to see us off, and we started.

The Emperor Alexander was staying in the house belonging to the Prince de Talleyrand. We were immediately ushered into his presence; but before allowing us to lay before him the object of our mission, he begged us first to hear what he had to say. Thereupon he expressed warmly, and in the most chivalrous manner, his admiration for the French armies, the great glory with which they had covered themselves, notwithstanding the reverses they had met with, which in nowise detracted from their valour. He admitted that they had only yielded compulsorily to superior force, of which he had had an example recently at Fère-Champenoise, where a mere detachment, consisting for the most part of raw recruits, in blouses and round hats, had immortalized itself by its courageous resistance to all the forces collected at that point; he told us that he was deeply distressed at the loss of so many brave men, and that, after making every effort to save them from certain death, he had at last succeeded in inducing them to surrender as prisoners of war.* He said further that he was

* This was the affair related in the printed bulletin dated March 26, of which the 6 turned upside down made 29, and to which the Emperor would attach no credence while we were before Vitry.—*Note by Marshal Macdonald.*

no longer an enemy of Napoleon, now that he was unfortunate; that he had previously been his greatest admirer, his friend and his ally; that, on his side, he had faithfully carried out their treaty against England, that was, against her commerce, although the said treaty caused cruel suffering to his own subjects, whose only means of obtaining what was necessary for their wants and comfort was by means of exchange, although they murmured aloud, and there was some danger of a revolution in his States. It had, however, come to his certain knowledge, he said, that, contrary to the treaty of prohibition, his ally permitted licenses to be issued, and that, notwithstanding his representations, which passed unheeded, he continued to issue them. He had therefore been obliged to shut his eyes to some traffic which Napoleon insisted upon closing. Some curt diplomatic notes were exchanged, and seeing himself threatened with a fresh war, he had preferred to await the effects in his own country rather than provoke it.

'You know the results, gentlemen,' he continued; 'my armies, and the climate of my country, avenged my subjects for the miseries they had undergone. You were but passive instruments. I only esteem you the more for having done your duty, and proved your attachment, your devotion, and your fidelity to your master, of which you are now giving him a fresh

proof, instead of doing as many others have done, who have thrown themselves into our arms, and done their best to bring about his downfall, and that of the French Empire. We were willing to treat openly with him at Prague, Frankfort, and Châtillon-sur-Seine; he would not consent, and see whither his obstinacy has brought him. We have now declared that we will not treat further with him, because we can place no reliance upon him; but we do not wish in the smallest degree to take any part in the government of France, nor to lay her under any contributions, nor to diminish her ancient territory. We will even increase it.'

He recommenced his praises of the French army, of its Marshals, etc. We saw through it, and clearly distinguished how much flattery there was in this long speech, which we did not interrupt.

When he had finished, Marshal Ney began to speak, and said some good things and some useless ones. We tried to stop him, but he replied in an angry voice:

'Let me speak. You will have your turn.'

The Duke of Vicenza was boiling over; it would have been more suitable for him to reply, as he was much better acquainted with the proper forms, and was more moderate. The Emperor listened quietly. At last conversation became general. We praised the generosity of the allies

when they had gained the right to avenge themselves upon us; but we referred that generosity to his personal magnanimity. We spoke of the glory and bravery of the Russian troops, and of his own in particular, and made use of the weapons that he had employed to return all that he had with so much liberality and chivalry accorded to us. He seemed much touched.

After these reciprocal compliments we profited by his favourable disposition to ask for his intervention and support in favour of the cause that we had come to submit to him, and the proposals that we had to make to him—that is to say, the abdication of Napoleon, which ought to satisfy the allies, the recognition of his son as his successor, and of the Empress as Regent.

'It is too late,' he said; 'opinion has made too great strides. We have not checked it, and it is growing momentarily. Why did you not come to an understanding with the Conservative Senate?'

'By what right did it act?' we exclaimed. 'It has belied its title; it had no mission; a crawling, creeping, complaisant slave, it depended for its existence on the constitutions of the Empire. They are now overturned; it therefore is nothing. It is usurping at this moment an authority which can only emanate from national opinion, and that opinion has everything to fear from the resentment of the Bourbons the *émigrés*, and the Royalists.

Will your Majesty permit us to speak plainly to this vile Senate? Every institution, everything that now exists, will be threatened; those who have acquired national property will be sought out; a frightful civil war will be the result. The nation has made too many sacrifices; she has paid too dearly for the little liberty she has secured, not to be ready to do anything to safeguard it. The army will not allow the glory wherewith it has covered itself to be trodden under foot. Unhappy by the fault of its chief, it will, either with or without him, spring again from its ashes, stronger, more ardent than ever for national liberties, institutions, and independence. Henceforward its one aim will be to consolidate these without thinking of conquering or harassing other nations.'

.The Emperor of Russia, struck by these arguments, was shaken.

'Be our mediator, Sire; it is a fresh field of glory, and one worthy of the great soul of your Majesty. You have declared that you made war only against one man; he is vanquished; let your Majesty show that you are a generous conqueror. Earn the gratitude of the great national majority, as you have earned ours by your magnanimous moderation.'

The Emperor seemed much moved by our confidence in him, and said:

'I have no reason to object to your seeing the

Senate. I do not care about the Bourbons; I do not know them. I fear it will be impossible to obtain the Regency. Austria is most opposed to it. Were I alone, I would willingly consent; but I must act in concert with my allies. Since the Bourbons will not do, take a foreign Prince, or choose one of your marshals, as Sweden did Bernadotte; there are plenty of illustrious men in France. Finally, gentlemen, in order to prove the sincere esteem and great regard I entertain for you, I will make your proposals known to my allies, and will support them. I am most anxious to have the matter settled, for there are risings still going on in Lorraine and the Vosges, and they are increasing; people are shooting each other there every day; a column of my troops lost 3,000 men while crossing those departments, and that *without seeing a single French soldier.* Your outspokenness has encouraged mine, and I do not hesitate to tell you these things. Come back at nine o'clock—we will finish then.'

We withdrew; on entering the great drawing-room we found there the members of the so-called Provisional Government, with the provisional Ministers and other persons. Anxiety and fear were depicted upon every countenance. A discussion had begun, when the members of this Government were summoned to the Emperor's presence. They were all in disgraceful undress, and we had found the Czar in full military uniform.

They remained with him some time. The discussion in the drawing-room increased in animation. At length they reappeared, and wished to take a high hand and authoritative manner with us, which we promptly resented, telling them that they were a set of factious, ambitious men, who were betraying their country, and forswearing the oaths they had sworn.

The Prince de Talleyrand took no part. As the discussion became very noisy, the Duke of Vicenza raised his voice, and said :

'Gentlemen, you forget that you are in the house of the Emperor of Russia.'

Silence ensued, and Monsieur de Talleyrand invited everyone to go down to his room, adding that there we might seek, and perhaps find, a means of agreement and conciliation. We answered that we did not recognise their authority, and departed.

On my own account I had overwhelmed with reproaches my friends Beurnonville and Dupont, who had accepted the Ministry of War. This latter had good reason to complain of Napoleon, who had caused him to be tried by a commission of Ministers and Privy Councillors who were devoted to him, instead of sending him before his proper judges, either the High Court, or a court-martial, for his share in the memorable and sad affair at Baylen.*

* Surrender of Dupont to the Spanish General Castanos, July 19, 1808.—*Translator's note.*

I have forgotten to say that as we were leaving the presence of the Emperor of Russia one of his generals began to speak to him in a low voice. I heard these words, *totum corpus*, to which at first I attached no importance, but which gained great significance a few moments later.

We were going to the house of Marshal Ney. We learned there that our arrival had struck terror into the hearts of all the supporters of the new state of things; more than 2,000 white cockades had been removed from as many hats, and the Senate was trembling.

While we were at breakfast the Duke of Ragusa was called away. He returned a moment later, pale and as if beside himself, and said to us:

'My whole corps went over to the enemy last night.'

He took his sword, and we saw him no more.

We deplored this event, which destroyed our last remaining hope, and at the same time gave colour to the assumptions of our enemies. A vast field of conjecture was opened to us by the impression naturally produced by such a sad piece of news. What must it not have been in the army, at the headquarters at Fontainebleau, after such an occurrence? Would others follow his example? Would despair increase? On the one hand we had isolated cases of desertion, which were alarming enough; on the other, we had the

audacity of those ambitious men who had put themselves at the head of the movement in Paris from motives of personal interest, while our presence in the capital had sufficed to cause the disappearance of more than three-fourths of the white cockades. Besides, would not the allies, who had at first shown themselves so pleasant and willing to receive us, and to treat with an army whose broken remains even they dreaded, profit by so unhoped-for a circumstance, which lent such weight to their claims? However, confident in the chivalrous honour of the Emperor Alexander, we waited, not without anxiety, till he should summon us to hear the result of his conference with his allies.

The message came at length, and we were introduced into his presence. The King of Prussia was with the Emperor, who received us with the kindly, simple manner that has been observed by all who approached him. His face showed symptoms of secret satisfaction—the cause was not far to seek; he knew what had happened at Essonne.

The King of Prussia spoke first, and told us that we had caused all the misfortunes of Europe. The Crown Prince of Wurtemberg had apostrophized us in the same strain the previous evening at Petit-Bourg. The Czar, fearing that this would create discussion, hastily intervened.

'My brother,' said he, 'this is not the time to

argue about what is passed,' and immediately entered upon the subject-matter of the conference. He told us that the question had been decided in the negative.

Thus was extinguished the last feeble ray of hope that our first interview had lighted as to the establishment of a Regency, consequent upon the abdication of Napoleon in favour of his son.

Alexander added that opinion in Paris was against it, and that this opinion was being rapidly made known in the provinces; that wives were always wives—that is to say, weak—and that Napoleon, wherever he might be, and with his authority, would dictate to his; that it would be easy for him to repossess himself of power, and that the thirst for vengeance would drive him to shake anew the foundations of Europe; that every nation had need of peace and rest, especially France, after so many years of disturbance, so many sacrifices, and so much bloodshed, from all of which she had gained immense glory, and nothing else, and that that glory had been too dearly purchased. Nevertheless, her territory should be enlarged, as to secure the political balance and equilibrium of Europe it was necessary that she should be stronger and more powerful than under her kings.

Who, on hearing this high-flown language, would not have expected that an extension of her frontier on the Rhine would be granted? The

net result of it all was Chambéry and its outskirts!

The Emperor of Russia added that, as a proof of their respect and admiration for the army, of their esteem and friendship for France, which would soon be sealed, no war indemnity would be imposed or exacted by the allies, except a sum of 30,000,000 francs (£1,200,000), which was intended, I believe, as a little present to the King of Prussia.

They kept their word. It is true that they obtained, not an equivalent, but a considerable, reparation by their seizure of the immense store of war material contained in the garrisoned towns which were not taken by them, but which were made over to them by the disgraceful treaty of April 29. This treaty was published in the *Moniteur*, without signature, and public opinion protested that it had not been concluded gratuitously.

As we could oppose no further objections to the determination of the allies, the question arose as to their intentions regarding the ultimate fate of Napoleon and his family. Caulaincourt cleverly introduced the question, and I added that Napoleon had expressly enjoined and commanded us neither to discuss nor to agree to anything personal to himself. The Duke of Vicenza's question, therefore, arose partly from curiosity and partly from foresight, as it might happen that

Napoleon, forgetting his restrictions, might wish to know beforehand what fate was in store for him.

The Emperor of Russia appeared surprised and incredulous. I showed him my instructions. After reading them over, and convincing himself of the accuracy of my statement, his demeanour became more solemn, and he said :

'I esteem him the more for it. Henceforward I cease to be his enemy, and restore my friendship to him. I was formerly his greatest admirer; I allied myself with him, approved every variation in his policy, recognised all the sovereigns he created and established, and the alliances he formed. I adopted, and faithfully carried out, his Continental system as long as the treaty lasted. He demanded its prolongation, but this treaty was causing the utmost suffering to my country; and while I was ruining my subjects by forbidding all commerce, he was enriching himself by selling licenses. He threatened me. I put myself in a state of defence. He advanced to attack me, invaded my dominions, and drove me back into the very heart of my empire. I will say no more about the calamities which have produced such terrible results for you and for France; they brought about the catastrophe in which we, in our turn, have to play a part—the fall of Napoleon and his dynasty. But he is in trouble. To-day I become once more his friend, and I will forget

everything. He shall have the island of Elba as his sovereignty, or *something else;* he shall keep the title by which he is generally recognised; his family shall receive pensions and preserve their estates. Tell him, gentlemen, that if he will have none of this sovereignty, or in case he can find no other shelter, he is to come into my dominions. There he shall be received as a sovereign. He may trust Alexander's word.'

During this speech the King of Prussia had, I think, retired. The Emperor declined to give any explanation of the words *something else* when we asked him what they meant. We then asked for a written memorandum of the proposal, or rather decision, of the allies; but he objected, saying that the matter was one that ought to be treated diplomatically, and through the usual ministerial channels, whereupon we called his attention to the fact that Napoleon might fear false interpretations, or misunderstandings, and we implored him to have simply written down, without date or signature, what he had condescended to say to us by word of mouth concerning the resolutions of the allies. He at length consented, left the room, and returned shortly afterwards holding in his hands a minute in every respect corresponding with what he had declared to us. He gave it to Caulaincourt, granted us an armistice of forty-eight hours, in order to allow us time to go and return, furnished in the name of

the army with sufficient instructions to admit of our treating upon the basis agreed to, and dismissed us.

We were at least as anxious to return to head-quarters as the Emperor Napoleon and the army were to learn the result of our negotiations. The defection of the Duke of Ragusa's corps had naturally caused great excitement there. It was supposed, and rightly, that this occurrence might hinder our mission, and in every respect render its success doubtful. Our return calmed for the moment the most excited as well as the most timorous spirits.

CHAPTER XII.

Attitude of Napoleon—His Opinion of Marmont—Command given to Berthier—Feeling among the Allies—Austrian Trickery—Eagerness of Ney—His Parsimony.

IMMEDIATELY on arrival we went to the castle. It was one o'clock in the morning. It was with the greatest difficulty that the Emperor was awakened and persuaded to get up; Caulaincourt himself had to go into his room and shake him somewhat roughly.* The fact that he was able to sleep so soundly in such a situation would seem to denote that he was either perfectly indifferent, or that he possessed a mind calm beyond that of ordinary men.

He appeared at length, and thanked us for the efforts we had made. He said that the desertion of Marmont's corps must necessarily have had great influence upon the determination of the

* Napoleon had on this night taken an opiate of excessive strength to compose himself to rest after the harassing events of the past few days. This gave rise to a report that the Emperor had attempted to poison himself.—See Bourrienne's 'Memoirs,' Constant's 'Memoirs,' and O'Meara's 'Voice from St. Helena.'

allies. In that he was not mistaken, for in the second interview the Emperor of Russia had spoken to us, upon all that concerned our mission, in a much more haughty and decided tone than in the first. In speaking of Napoleon personally, although, as I have said, his attitude was solemn, yet he made with much grace the offer of receiving him into his dominions.

When we came to this special point the Emperor asked how he and his family would be treated, and expressed a high opinion of the character of Alexander. He said that he knew him sufficiently well to feel certain that, had he not been worried and imposed upon by the allies, and above all by the influence of England, Alexander would have treated with him, and would have maintained his sovereignty and his dynasty in France. He added that the Empress had written to him from either Blois or Orleans to be of good courage; that she was sufficiently convinced of the affection her father bore her to be persuaded, as she also wished him to be, that the Emperor Francis would never give his consent or permission to the dethronement of his son-in-law; that she herself was determined to share his fate, be it what it might, that no human power should keep her from him, and that she was preparing to join him.

'You do not know the Empress,' he said; 'she is a Princess of strong character. If necessary,

she would play the part over again of Maria Theresa when she exhibited her son to the Hungarians.'

We, however, knew how much this feminine influence had been worth during the campaign of 1813, for during the armistice and the negotiations at Prague she had guaranteed, so the Emperor told me, the neutrality of her father. But Napoleon, as is universally known, liked to cherish illusions.

We tried to brush away the frivolous hopes with which the Empress encouraged him; the strongest proof that she was mistaken was to be found in the violent opposition to us that had been openly displayed by the Generalissimo Prince Schwarzenberg, and certainly he would not have acted as he did without formal orders from the Emperor of Austria, who was at Dijon, and whom he represented in the councils of the allies.

Napoleon could not help admitting that our observations contained some truth, but, suddenly leaving aside politics, the destiny of France and of the army, and only thinking of what was personal to himself, he came back to the offer made by the allies, and inquired whether we had discovered what was meant by the 'island of Elba or something else.' We answered in the negative, and after a few moments' reflection he said:

'It is probably the island of Corsica, and they would not name it in order to avoid the pun.* Very good, I choose the island of Elba. Do any of you gentlemen know that island? Is there a palace, a castle, a suitable or even tolerable dwelling there?'

We had none of us ever been there.

'In that case, seek through the army for an artillery or engineer officer. There must be some who have served there.'

He gave immediate orders to that effect.

He again spoke of Marmont's defection.

'It is I,' he said, 'who am probably the cause of it. I wished to know whether you had passed the outposts of the allies without difficulty, and also to talk with the Duke of Ragusa. I sent several officers in succession to summon him to give me an account of your journey. He had gone with you. His generals, who knew everything, and had had a share in the treaty of desertion, became uneasy at my repeated messages. They supposed that I knew all, and, fearing arrest, they took away their troops without even sending warning to the echeloned regiments whom they thus compromised and almost demoralized. The news upon this subject is very bad; it kept arriving, and it would appear that even the officers and generals are not quite free. Unfortunately

* What pun? Is some allusion meant to the abusive nickname of Corsican Ogre?

we could provide no remedy ; however, I ordered the echelons to advance and occupy the lines of Essonne.'

He had guessed correctly. He spoke of Marmont with great moderation, and we explained to him that he had been at first led away by indirect overtures from persons attached to him by friendship and bound to him by gratitude. Unhappily, having listened to these overtures, he made the mistake of answering by some counter-propositions, which he did not think were of a nature to be accepted ; they were, however, and already were when we reached Essonne. But the catastrophe in no wise depended upon his will, for when he came with us to Paris he left stringent orders with his generals that whatever happened they were to await his return, which would take place early next morning.

This event was the more annoying to him because he had arranged with Prince Schwarzenberg, at Petit-Bourg, that, notwithstanding their private agreement, his corps should not be sent into Normandy, should not be separated from the rest of the army, and should be included in any arrangement made by our negotiation. Fate, however, willed otherwise.

Under the particular circumstances the Duke of Ragusa could only be accused of culpable thoughtlessness ; under others it would no doubt have been a crime of high-treason. But under

existing circumstances what had he to hope for or to gain, raised as he was to the chief dignity in the army, to the most distinguished social title? Office? He practically held it already. The Emperor did not pursue the subject; he was only dissimulating, as was made evident by a proclamation issued the following year on the occasion of his fatal return from Elba.*

We begged the Emperor to take immediate steps to have the necessary instructions regarding so much of the negotiations as was personal to him and his family drawn up. He promised to send them to us next day, and thanked me personally for my behaviour and services. We retired, after again begging him not to delay, as there was a chance that the events at Essonne might increase the downheartedness of the army, and set an example to others. It was also necessary not to allow the goodwill and interest that the Emperor of Russia had displayed towards him and his family to cool.

During the morning we saw some of our colleagues, the Marshals, and a number of generals and superior officers. There was much excitement abroad, and, as a consequence of the dis-

* '*The French were never on the point of being more powerful, and the élite of the enemy's army was lost without resource. It would have found a tomb in those vast plains which it had so mercilessly laid waste, when the treason of the Duke of Ragusa delivered up the capital and disorganised the Army.*'—Extract from Proclamation of March, 1815, by the Emperor.

couragement in the army, opinion seemed to lean towards a change of government. We therefore had reason to apprehend partial and private desertions, and they occurred, notwithstanding all our efforts to prevent them. We pointed out that our strength lay in our unity; that by preserving our attitude, which was still redoubtable to the allies, we should awe them and obtain better terms; that it would be cowardice to abandon Napoleon, who was still their chief, and to leave him at the mercy of his enemies at home and abroad. Some regret was also expressed that he did not take the desperate step of fomenting a rising, and dragging the remains of our army to certain destruction, or, to crown our misfortunes, to civil war!

I cannot quite remember whether it was now, or at our first starting for Paris, that we made over the command of the army to Marshal Berthier, Prince of Neuchâtel, Vice-Constable and Major-General. The exact moment does not matter, for although we were the Emperor's envoys, we bore also the title of Commissioners of the Army, and it was only in the latter quality that the allies would receive us. We therefore agreed and instructed the Prince of Neuchâtel that he was to carry out no orders of Napoleon respecting movements of troops, and that he was to be guided entirely by the orders that we, the Commissioners, would give him to support our

negotiations. This arrangement was concluded; all promised and bound themselves to conform to it; you will see shortly how that promise was kept. Nevertheless, we never ceased repeating that upon our unity, and the firm and imposing attitude of the army, depended the success of our mission.

I had command of five army corps, including that of the Duke of Reggio, who was once more under my orders. In my absence I delegated to him authority over, and to General Molitor the command of, the corps, of which I was titulary chief; but for the sake of unity I placed it under that of the Marshal.

After this long conference, at which many useless things were said, we went to the castle. The bases of the treaty were prepared, and, furnished with plenary authority, we took leave of Napoleon, who appeared more resigned to his ultimate fate. He desired us to hasten matters, and bring about a speedy termination. We reached Paris late at night, and sent to apprise the Emperor, who postponed the interview until eleven o'clock next morning.

When we arrived, he already knew that Napoleon had accepted the sovereignty of the island of Elba.

We were very graciously received, but on the one hand there were personal considerations, on the other Alexander was secretly very glad to

see the satisfactory conclusion of a struggle that the allies feared might be prolonged. They would not now have had to fight the remnants of an army, but an armed population. A large number of the inhabitants of the Vosges and Lorraine had formed themselves into bodies, and were doing great mischief to the communications of the foreign troops. The Emperor Alexander had told me, and has since repeated to me, that in those departments alone they had lost 3,000 men without meeting a single French soldier!

The great majority in the capital was in favour of Napoleon, and the entire National Guard. The allies did not feel very safe there. The armies that had evacuated Spain, the frontiers of Italy and Piedmont, were still large, and might join with ours; the garrisons on the Rhine and on the Meuse might form a considerable force, and support insurrections which, from being partial at first, might come to be very serious general risings; the energy of Napoleon, although weakened by so many reverses, might awaken, and give a great impulse to France. All that was realized, and was, no doubt, the mainspring that rendered the Sovereigns so obliging, and the Provisional Government so miserable, so weak, so obsequious.

The first point for consideration was that of an armistice for an indefinite length of time, and a line of demarcation. The Emperor of Russia

said that, to give us a token of his esteem, he authorized us to fix it. We hesitated an instant; then I spoke, and asked for the left bank of the Seine; Alexander replied that he would willingly consent, but pointed out that Paris would thus be cut in half, that meetings between the troops, who must necessarily cross the river on business, or for their wants, or simply from curiosity, might produce results disagreeable to the capital, and that it would be better to avoid any contact between the troops on either side. Moreover, he thought that the allies would never consent to withdraw their advance-guards from the positions they occupied militarily; that it would be better and preferable to leave the troops outside rather than to fill the town with them, where they would be a hindrance to the inhabitants and to business. We admitted the justice of these arguments, and did not insist. Thereupon the Emperor Alexander offered me a pencil, which I begged to be allowed not to take; but he insisted with so much kindness upon my drawing the line that I at last gave way. It went round the outside of Paris, on both banks of the Seine, starting from the outposts of the foreigners, leaving to us on the left bank all the places not occupied that day by their troops. A map of France lay upon the table, and the outline was soon made. The armistice included all the armies and all the places which in France or abroad

were still holding out. Officers from both sides were to be sent to all points to stop hostilities; but as it was impossible to regulate from Paris the distant demarcations, we agreed that each side should keep the positions they might be holding at the moment when the envoys, who were to travel with the utmost speed, should arrive.

The line of the Seine was the most important; it described, from the mouth of the river at Essonne, a semicircle round the outposts of the allies to below Paris. The Emperor of Russia, after examining and approving this outline, gave orders to Prince Schwarzenberg to have copies made of it, and to send out instructions for the immediate cessation of hostilities. He then put us into communication with the ministers representing the allied Powers, to draw up the articles of the treaty, of which he undertook to secure the acceptance of the terms by the Provisional Government, in return for the receipt of the act of abdication.

The most urgent matter was the notification of the suspension of hostilities. As soon as we were informed that the Austrian staff had finished making a clean copy of the line of demarcation, we went to Prince Schwarzenberg to receive our copy, to read over our respective instructions to the officers bearing the notification of the armistice, to learn their names, and arrange for their departure.

While my colleagues were settling these matters, I thought that I would verify the copy of the line of demarcation, and it was a very fortunate idea of mine to do so, for, either by accident or design, our line, instead of beginning at the river at Essonne, had been pushed back to beyond Fontainebleau. The result of this would have been that the Emperor Napoleon must have quitted the castle, and our troops have retired to Nemours, and that very precipitately, for the convention upon this point was to be carried out within twenty-four hours. What made me think then, and keeps alive my suspicion now, that this was not merely done by mistake, was the obstinacy with which the Austrian staff and the Prince himself declared that the original had been exactly copied. I demanded to see it, so as to compare it with the copy; it could not be found. They declared it had been returned to the Emperor of Russia; we insisted upon their sending for it, but they made objections. Finally, taking my hat, I announced that I was going to the Emperor. Seeing my determination, and that my colleagues intended to support me by going with me, the Austrians yielded, and sent, or did not send, for the original map; but at the end of an hour or two, without producing this map, Prince Schwarzenberg told us that the Emperor of Russia said that we were right upon every point, and the copies were accordingly rectified.

When these points were settled to our satisfaction, my colleagues thanked me for the idea that I had had of comparing the line of demarcation, which we were to send immediately to Fontainebleau. What disappointment and annoyance would have been experienced at the French headquarters if we had received this map without examining it, as the start must have been made without delay! While writing these lines I still tremble to think of what the consequences might have been, for we should not have yielded. This was a fresh proof to us of the honour of the Emperor Alexander.

I must retrace my steps a little to mention a circumstance which had escaped me. On our return to Paris, while at dinner with Marshal Ney, one of his aides-de-camp entered in a state of great joy, and said to him:

'The Emperor of Russia was very pleased indeed with your letter, and here is the proof,' he continued, showing round his neck a decoration with which that Sovereign had just honoured him. He added that Monsieur de Talleyrand, President of the Provisional Government, thanked the Marshal for the important news he had given him. We all showed our surprise, and asked what this meant. Ney, embarrassed, stammered that on leaving the conference we had had with Napoleon the previous night, and fearing lest, in spite of his acceptance of the conditions proposed,

he might commit some folly, he, Marshal Ney, had considered it his duty to send an account of what had passed to the Emperor of Russia, so that the allies, being forewarned, might take their measures accordingly. We observed that he had no business to take such a step without consulting us, as his position as Commissioner lent great weight to his assertions. To reassure us he said he would show us copies of his letters. He summoned his secretary, who at first said he could not find them, and then came back to say that the minutes had been scratched out and altered, so as to be illegible. At that moment we received notice from the Emperor of Russia that he would receive us at eleven o'clock next morning. We thought we were going to inform him of Napoleon's acceptance of Elba, but he already knew all that had passed from Marshal Ney's letter, of which I have never heard the details.

Even without the sudden arrival of the tell-tale aide-de-camp, we were destined to know of this incident, for, before we were announced to the Emperor of Russia, we met Monsieur de Nesselrode, his Foreign Secretary, who paid some compliments to Marshal Ney upon his letter, and shortly afterwards the Emperor thanked him for it affectionately. As for Monsieur de Talleyrand, he was malicious enough to cause the letter he had received to be printed in the *Moniteur*, but whether in part or in full I know not.

This explains why Marshal Ney gave his personal adhesion to the new order of things unknown to us, and while we were actually negotiating; and why, later on, after the signature of the treaty, he abandoned us, and would not accompany us back to Fontainebleau. No doubt the *Moniteur* would have found its way thither, and he thus avoided the direct reproaches that Napoleon would not have failed to heap upon him.

Caulaincourt told me that, after being appointed one of the Commissioners, Ney had gone back to Napoleon, and told him that he had not sufficient money for the expenses of his mission. Napoleon had answered that he had only small funds remaining at Fontainebleau, that he had ordered the recall of the treasure that was with the Empress, but that meanwhile he promised him 15,000 francs (£600). Caulaincourt added that he had received this sum on our first return from Paris, and probably after he had written the letters to the Emperor of Russia and to Talleyrand. However, we wanted for nothing; we were driven in Napoleon's carriages, and the Duke of Vicenza paid in his name the expenses of hiring post-horses. But I have always heard that it was a custom of the Marshal whenever he was sent upon a mission to object that he had no money, and Napoleon supplied him.

In relating this episode I am not moved by any

animosity against Marshal Ney, whose bravery I have admired more than other people, and I was one of those who helped to name him the 'Bravest of the brave.' Besides, I am only writing for you, my son; this episode will simply serve to let you know the truth of what may be published concerning the letters to the Emperor of Russia and Monsieur de Talleyrand, when you are old enough to hear about, and understand, the events in which I have been an actor, and which I witnessed.

CHAPTER XIII.

Reported Flight of Napoleon—Desertions—The New Order of Things—Macdonald Refuses Adhesion—Termination of the Drama—Last Interview at Fontainebleau—Napoleon's Farewell.

I RETURN to our negotiations and our line of demarcation. The worries and delays we had had to put up with were but a prelude to one much more serious annoyance.

While we were busied about sending out the couriers to settle the demarcations that had been altered upon our instance, we received an urgent message from the Emperor of Russia, demanding our immediate attendance upon him.

On arriving we noticed his severe manner and threatening tone.

'I am indignant, gentlemen,' he said, 'at learning the part you are playing here. Was it to deceive my good faith that you came hither as negotiators? Was it in order that you might assist Napoleon's escape?'

From our dismayed manner he could see that

we were not affecting surprise. Indeed, we were confounded by this improbable news.

'What!' I said, 'can your Majesty believe that! After your generosity has been made known to and realized by Napoleon, after his acceptance of your offers guaranteeing his safety, can you believe that he would expose himself to seizure by the allied troops, that he would risk being taken by a band of Cossacks, and spending the rest of his life in captivity, if not worse? No,' I continued with warmth, 'that cannot be; it is not true. This piece of news is false, invented; someone has wickedly deceived your Majesty, in order to check your kindness towards Napoleon!'

'Here is the report,' he returned, 'addressed to me, and signed by—I think, Prince Repnine, who commands my forces at La Ferté-Aleps; and I am bound to believe him.'

'Someone has deceived or led him into error,' I replied.

The report was in Russian; the Emperor translated it. In it his General informed him that the French General D——, who was opposed to him, had sent him word that he had just received intelligence that Napoleon, with fifty mounted chasseurs of his Guard, had fled, no one knew whither; that not knowing to whom to apply, he begged him to obtain orders for him and his cavalry from the Provisional Government.

This may all have arisen from the ill-will, mis-

understanding, and insinuation of this same Provisional Government, which had numerous agents at all the points occupied by the army, to deceive the leaders as to the course of affairs, to discourage and alienate the men, and instigate defections. This was done to a large extent.

I proposed to the Emperor to send one of his aides-de-camp with one of mine to Fontainebleau, to verify this news, and to assure themselves of Napoleon's presence there. He agreed, and the officers started; but while awaiting their return he suspended all negotiations, as well as the execution of the demarcation agreed upon at the armistice. On reaching Marshal Ney's house we had proof positive of the falsity of the news, for a letter had arrived from the Emperor Napoleon, dated that very day (and he was said to have taken flight the day before), demanding the return of his act of abdication, and revoking our powers. We could not imagine what had induced him to go back upon his previous determination, and we, in our turn, indignant that he should think us capable of lending ourselves to such folly (I might use a much stronger word), refused point-blank. This demand, however, had one advantage, inasmuch as it proved to us that Napoleon was still at Fontainebleau; but we vainly strove to find the answer to the riddle of the flight, as well as the motives that had induced him to redemand his act of abdication.

The aides-de-camp returned, and confirmed our assertion that there was no truth in the report of his flight. The suspension was removed; we hurried on the tracing of the lines of demarcation, with directions that they were to be carried out forthwith, for our troops were very badly off in their bivouacs, and crowded in their cantonments with supplies. Rations were very seldom distributed, and this augmented discontent and discouragement, and increased desertion, to the great satisfaction of the allies and the Provisional Government, so awed were they by these poor remains of troops who had shown their valour in so many battles and had more than once made Europe tremble!

I cannot say the same for their leaders. They vied with each other in displaying anxiety to submit themselves, in spite of all our entreaties and advice. Scarcely had each one made peace for himself in the name of his troops, who were ignorant of what was going on, than he abandoned them, and hurried to Paris, down to General Molitor even, whom I had left in charge of my titulary corps, and who, despite my orders, made terms for himself behind my back.

I may repeat here what I have already said, that the honour of the Emperor Alexander would not allow him to profit by these desertions and to make them a pretext for breaking off negotiations with us, for we now only represented a fictitious

army. He kept all his promises, all his engagements to Napoleon, and always recognised us as Commissioners.

While the negotiations were in progress, I questioned my aide-de-camp who had accompanied the Emperor's to Fontainebleau. He had learned there that a certain General Allix, commanding at Sens, had seen an Austrian Major pass on his way to Paris from Dijon, where his Sovereign was. It appears that this Major told him that his master, from whom he was bearing despatches to the Emperor of Russia, disapproved strongly of all that had been and was still being done in Paris; that he had taken up arms against Napoleon in order to put a check upon his ambition and reduce his power; that he was quite willing, as he had undertaken, to enclose him within the ancient limits of France; but that he did not, and never would, consent to the dethronement of his son-in-law, his daughter, and the proper and direct heir to their crown. According to this real or invented story, the General had immediately sent notice to Napoleon, whose hopes were raised for a moment, but were quickly dashed again, for he learned from a better and more trustworthy source that his father-in-law approved of his deposition and the recall of the Bourbons. It was by the light of this will-o'-the-wisp that he had written to demand the return of his act of abdication. I have never been able to

get to the bottom of the story of his flight. I might have questioned the French General who told it to the Russian, but for the sake of his honour I would not ask him to enlighten me.

At length, on April 11, the last signature was affixed to the treaty between the Foreign Ministers and ourselves. That same evening we handed back the act of abdication to the Provisional Government in return for their guarantee that the clauses should be carried out as far as concerned them, and under the guarantee of the allied Powers. The exchange of ratifications was fixed for the 14th, at eleven o'clock in the morning, at the house of the Prince of Hardenberg. I was charged to hand in ours.

The members of the Provisional Government had wished to impart some solemnity to the reception of the act of abdication; they had summoned their ministers and the members of their party. After we had handed in this document, rightly regarded as the last and most important ever signed by a Sovereign once the most powerful in the world, Monsieur de Talleyrand advanced towards us and said:

'Now that all is concluded, we ask you, gentlemen, to give in your adhesion to the new order of things that has been established.'

Marshal Ney hastened to say that he had already done so.

'I do not address myself to you, but to the Dukes of Tarentum and Vicenza.'

I simply answered that I refused; Caulaincourt did likewise. Talleyrand could neither change colour nor turn paler, but his face swelled, as though he were bursting with rage. However, he contained himself, and merely said to me:

'But, Monsieur le Maréchal, your personal adhesion is of importance to us, for it cannot fail to exercise great influence upon the army and upon France. All your engagements are now terminated, and you are free.'

'No,' I replied, 'and no one ought to know better than yourself that as long as a treaty is not ratified it may be annulled; when that formality has been fulfilled, I shall know what to do.'

Talleyrand made no answer, stepped back several paces, and we withdrew.

Ney informed us that, as his mission was now at an end, he should not return with us to Fontainebleau; and then, apparently addressing me, he said:

'I shall not go there in search of rewards.'

'I am not in the habit of receiving, still less of asking for them,' I answered; 'and,' with an allusion to the 15,000 francs, 'I have not received any in advance. I am returning thither to perform a duty, to keep to the end my engagements and the promises I have made to the Emperor.'

Next day, April 12, Caulaincourt and I started

together for Fontainebleau. The Count d'Artois entered Paris, I believe, at the same moment with the title of Lieutenant-General of the kingdom.

We found Napoleon c ılm and tranquil, although he learned that all was concluded. He again thanked us affectionately for all that we had done for him and his family. Not seeing Marshal Ney, he merely asked, without further remark :

'Did not the Marshal return with you ?'

It was easy for him to interpret the silence with which we received this insidious question, because he had noticed plainly that he was not there. It was nearly six o'clock. He kept us to dinner, but postponed it for an hour, in order to draw up the ratifications.

Just as we were going in to dinner he sent us word to begin without him, as he felt unwell and was going to bed; food was, however, sent to him. He also settled nine o'clock in the morning as the hour at which we were to come to receive the ratifications.

An aide-de-camp arrived from the Emperor of Russia, I know not whether before, during, or after dinner. He was the bearer of the ratified treaty, sent by his master to Napoleon out of courtesy. This aide-de-camp was, I believe, Monsieur de Schuvaloff, one of Alexander's favourites. He was admitted, I believe, but I do not know what passed between him and

Napoleon. If the Duke of Vicenza ever writes his Memoirs, no doubt he will mention the subject.

All those who had remained at Fontainebleau, and who were for the most part attached to the service of the house and person of the Emperor, were overjoyed at seeing the termination of this great drama. They had nothing further to hope for from him; decency had kept them at their posts, but they longed for the moment of dismissal.

Next morning, at nine o'clock, I was introduced into the King's presence. The Dukes of Bassano and Vicenza were with the Emperor. He was seated before the fire, clothed in a simple dimity dressing-gown, his legs bare, his feet in slippers, his neck uncovered, his head buried in his hands, and his elbows resting on his knees. He did not stir when I entered, although my name was announced in a loud voice. After some minutes of silent waiting the Duke of Vicenza said to him:

'Sire, the Marshal Duke of Tarentum has come in obedience to your orders; it is important that he should start again for Paris.'

His Majesty appeared to wake from a dream, and to be surprised at seeing me. He got up and gave me his hand with an apology for not having heard me enter. As soon as he uncovered his face I was struck by his appearance; his complexion was yellow and greenish.

'Is your Majesty not well?' I asked.

'No,' answered the Emperor; 'I have been very ill all night.'

Thereupon he seated himself again, dropped into his former attitude, and appeared once more plunged in his reveries. The two other spectators and I looked at each other without speaking. At last, after a somewhat lengthy pause, the Duke of Vicenza again said:

'Sire, the Duke of Tarentum is waiting. The deeds which he is to take with him ought to be delivered to him, seeing that the delay will expire in twenty-four hours, and that the exchange is to be made in Paris.'

The Emperor, rousing himself a second time from his meditations, got up more briskly, but his colour had not changed, and his face was melancholy.

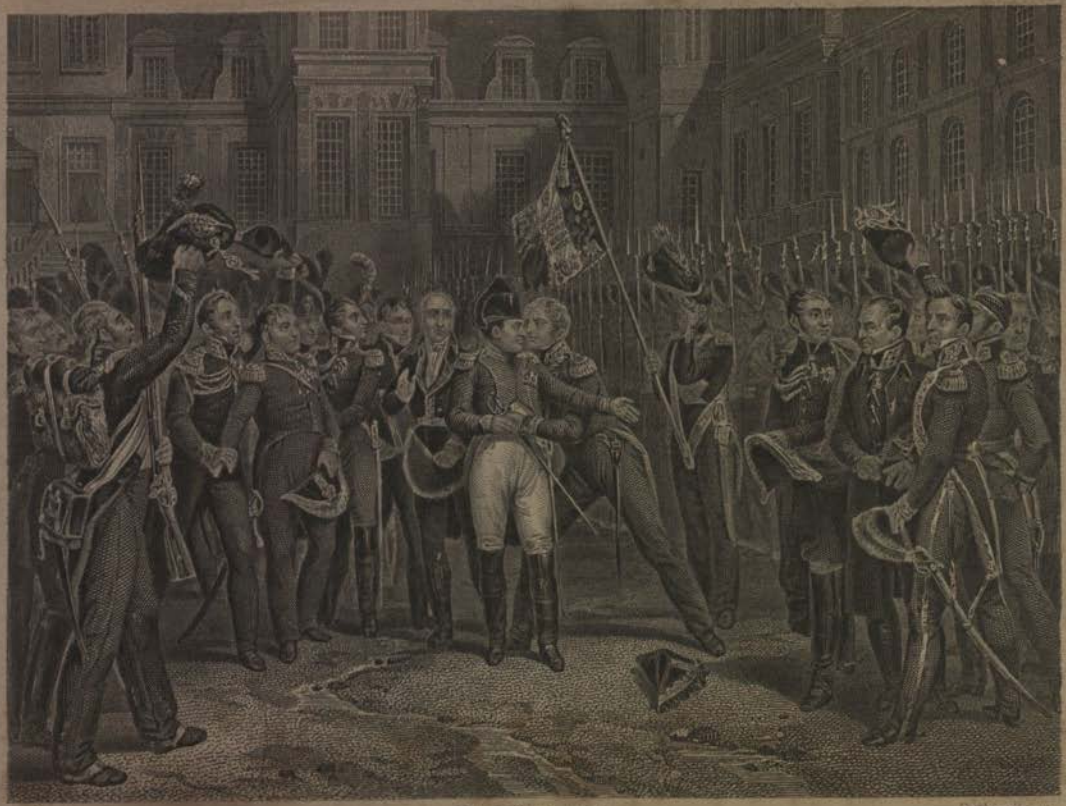
'I feel rather better,' he said to us, and then added: 'Duke of Tarentum, I cannot tell you how touched by, and grateful for, your conduct and devotion I am. I did not know you well; I was prejudiced against you. I have done so much for, and loaded with favours, so many others, who have abandoned and neglected me; and you, who owed me nothing, have remained faithful to me! I appreciate your loyalty all too late, and I sincerely regret that I am no longer in a position to express my gratitude to you except by words. I know that your delicacy and

disinterestedness have left you without fortune; and I am not unaware of the generous manner in which you refused to accept a present of considerable value at Gratz in 1809, which the States of the province offered you in token of their gratitude for the severe discipline and order you maintained among my troops, and where your strict equity did justice to all. Formerly I was rich and powerful; now I am poor.'

'I flatter myself,' I answered, 'that your Majesty thinks too well of me to believe that I would accept any reward in your present position; my conduct, upon which you place too high a value, has been entirely disinterested.'

'I know it,' he said, pressing my hand; 'but, without hurting your delicacy, you can accept a present of another kind, the sword of Mourad-Bey which I wore at the battle of Mont-Thabor; keep it in remembrance of me and of my friendship for you.'

He had it brought to him, and offered it to me. I thought I might accept this present. I thanked him very warmly; we threw ourselves into each other's arms, and embraced one another effusively. He begged me to come and see him in Elba if any chance took me into Italy; I promised. At length we separated. The documents that I was to carry were given to me. I made my preparations for departure, and since then I have never seen Napoleon again.



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THE FAREWELL AT FONTAINEBLEAU

London, for Richard Bentley and Son, 1862

CHAPTER XIV.

Delivery of the Treaty—The Marshal's Reappearance at the Tuileries—Dinner with the Czar—And with Monsieur—Arrival of the King at Compiègne—His Reception of the Marshals—Dinner with the King—Macdonald's Opinion—The King comes to Saint Ouen.

I REACHED Paris that evening, and fulfilled next day the mission with which I was charged—the delivery of the treaty ratified by Napoleon himself. There was no exchange, for, as I have said, the Emperor Alexander had sent his personal ratification direct and with great courtesy.

The Foreign Ministers, who were assembled at the house of the Prince of Hardenberg, received me with great demonstrations of politeness, and showed great satisfaction at finding the united efforts of the allied Sovereigns crowned with a success so unexpected for their cause.

The Prince of Hardenberg appeared to have forgotten the decided manner in which I had treated him in January, 1813, after the desertion of the Prussian corps under my orders. He

contented himself with asking me for news of various persons whom he had known in the French army, and with speaking to me of his friend the Count de St. Marsan, whom he had had the pleasure of meeting. The Count de St. Marsan had spent several years in Berlin, till 1813, as French minister. He had followed the King of Prussia into Silesia when he suddenly quitted his residence at Potsdam on hearing of the final disasters accompanying our retreat, and of the desertion of his body of troops, for which he appeared to fear that he might be held responsible. It was afterwards said that Monsieur de St. Marsan was more devoted to Prussia than to France, and that long before the catastrophe he had made his peace with the allies. I have never troubled to verify this rumour.

General Dupont, at that time Minister for War, and a friend of mine of many years' standing, having learned that I had delivered the treaty, came to me, in the name of the Comte d'Artois, Lieutenant-General of the kingdom, to solicit my personal adherence to the changes that had taken place. I had executed my engagements; I was no longer bound by oath; in a word, I was free. I had no other objections to make that could carry

* We had made acquaintance in 1784, in Holland, when we were both serving in Maillebois' legion: since then we had seldom been long without news of each other.—*Note by Marshal Macdonald.*

any weight, and I acted honestly and honourably in putting my hand to the document that appeared next day in the *Moniteur*. You will observe, my son, that I afterwards faithfully carried out the new engagements I had just contracted; it is an example that I recommend you to follow.

It was some time ere I went to the Tuileries to pay my respects to Monsieur, at that time Lieutenant-General of the kingdom, now King Charles X. My friends urged me. I had no objection to going, but I thought it more fitting not to show too much anxiety, after executing a mission not very well calculated to please the Prince, and especially after having exhibited so much resistance and opposition.

At length I went thither. The drawing-rooms were furnished as they had been at the zenith of the fallen man. Somebody told his Royal Highness that I was there, for I noticed that he immediately glanced in my direction, and came straight through the crowd towards me. I bowed; his first and last words were:

'How are you, Monsieur le Maréchal? I have not seen you before.'

Fancying that there was a reproach implied in his words, I raised my head, and said:

'No, Monseigneur; I had obligations and duties to perform. I will carry them out equally faithfully henceforward.'

At these words, Monsieur turned his back upon

me, which at first confirmed my surmise; but a few days later chance gave me an opportunity of discovering that his Royal Highness had unintentionally addressed me as he did.

The Emperor of Russia invited all the Marshals then in Paris, together with the Minister for War and the Duke of Vicenza, to dinner. No stranger, not even of his own nation, was present. His Imperial Majesty no doubt wished to avoid arguments, discussions, and differences of opinion which might have had results. Questions of politics and of party are like questions of religion. Everyone keeps to his own belief, the only difference being that soldiers argue more hotly.

The Emperor wished to talk freely to us and put us quite at our ease. The events of the war naturally furnished the chief topic. His Majesty never ceased praising the virtues of our soldiers; their obedience, devotion, knowledge, talent, heroic bravery, nay, rashness, their keenness in battle, their humanity after victory. He returned again to the subject of the feat of arms at Fère-Champenoise, and the splendid resistance offered by that handful of conscripts to the forces that surrounded them. 'I saved their lives in spite of themselves!' he said.

What astonished him above all was the manner in which both officers and men endured, without a murmur, such long and frequent privations, regarding all their fatigues as nothing. His

Majesty spoke kindly of Napoleon, pitying his fallen enemy for the necessity he had forced upon him (Alexander) of taking the lead in the coalition.

Someone asked him whether the cavalier manner in which Napoleon had broken off, almost as soon as they were set on foot, the negotiations for the hand of the Grand-Duchess, his sister, had not contributed to cool his former admiration, and to decide him to approach England. He replied that such was not the case, and that, notwithstanding the absolute authority with which the Czars are invested, they have none whatever over the daughters, who in all matrimonial matters are exclusively dependent upon their mothers. He added that he had promised to use his influence with his mother, but that Napoleon, knowing what strong resistance would be offered by the Empress Dowager, and her hatred of him, and wishing to contract immediately, and at any cost, an alliance which should legitimize his sovereignty, had drawn back and ordered his Ambassador at Petersburg to proceed no further with his proposition. He had then given ear to the underhand insinuations that, if he would turn towards Austria, there was no doubt that the Ambassador representing that Power had authority to treat for a marriage. The Emperor Alexander had already had wind of this when Caulaincourt came to him charged with the painful duty of announcing Napoleon's renunciation of his suit.

'I might,' he added, 'have considered this rupture as an insult, and have been offended by it, the more so as I said at the time, and the Duke of Vicenza can bear me out: "For my own part, I consider this alliance suitable, but my sister is not yet of a marriageable age, and I fear that my mother will oppose it strongly. However, I will try to change her opinion, and in time, which is necessary, moreover, to my sister's development, we shall perhaps succeed in overcoming her objections." Napoleon took these remarks as a refusal, and we heard no more about it, as it was purely a family question, and not one of government or of politics that touched my dominions.'

Such were the explanations given to us by this Sovereign regarding a circumstance which had, at the time, been very much discussed privately, and of which very different views were taken. I am satisfied of the correctness of the story, for it was afterwards corroborated to me by the Duke of Vicenza, who told me further how extremely difficult his position had been.

The Emperor then turned the conversation to our official and private correspondence, which had been intercepted and deciphered so that he could read it.

'Monsieur le Maréchal,' he said, turning to me, 'some of your reports that we have seen have been very remarkable, as also your letters

to your children, and their answers. They appear to be very fond of you.'

I begged the Emperor to have the goodness to cause them to be restored to me. He replied that they were in the hands of his sister, the Crown Princess of Wurtemberg, who had been charmed with them, but that he would ask her for them. I know not whether he forgot his promise, but the fact remains that they have never been given back to me.

Returning to the subject of the official correspondence, I said with a smile :

'It is not surprising that your Majesty was able to decipher it. Your Majesty had been given the key.'

He looked very grave, laid one hand on his heart, and extended the other.

'I give you my word of honour,' he said, 'that that is not the case.'

I alluded to the desertion of General Jomini, chief of Marshal Ney's staff, who had gone over to the enemy, carrying with him all the papers and documents relative to the situation, after the denunciation of the armistice in August, 1813.

Monsieur, Lieutenant-General of the kingdom, gave, in his turn, a dinner to the Marshals and a few Generals. We were not yet accustomed to seeing the Tuileries inhabited by a new master, who had so easily obtained possession of it, and who a few months previously had certainly had

no idea of being there. He must, at times, have felt as much surprised as we were.

The Prince received me with his well-known grace, which entirely dissipated the idea that he was prejudiced against me on account of my last visit.

The dinner was served with Napoleon's plate, glass, and linen ; the imperial monogram did not seem to hurt the eyes of the newcomer then ; his susceptibilities grew more delicate later. Monsieur was in very good spirits, did the honours courteously and kindly, and ate a good dinner. At dessert he proposed the health of the King. We bowed, and responded by the customary cry of 'Vivat!'

Conversation turned upon various circumstances of the war, but so as to wound no feelings. Monsieur ended by praising loudly the virtues of the King his brother, his profound and extensive knowledge, his wit, and, above all, his prodigious memory, which was true enough ; but what was less true, was the assurance that he gave us of his admiration for the deeds of arms, and the great talents of the French Generals during two-and-twenty years, filled with celebrated and surprising warlike achievements. In this connection the Prince gave a word of praise to each of us. In short, we were much pleased with the attentions and politeness of Monsieur.

All they who, like me, have had opportunities

of talking to King Louis XVIII., have been able to convince themselves of his indifference to military matters. I was one of the commanders of the Royal Guard, and he never put a question to me concerning my regiment.

The King was expected at Calais on April 24. It was suggested to us that his Majesty would have great pleasure in receiving his Marshals at Compiègne; we went thither accordingly. The Duke of Ragusa and the Prince of the Moskowa preceded us, the former as bearer of a mission from the Provisional Government; the latter as having a mission of his own, namely that of congratulating the King in the name of the army and its leaders. They both advanced, and met the King a league beyond Compiègne.

We awaited his Majesty's arrival, and entered the castle behind him. The Prince of Neuchâtel, who was at our head, made a speech, in which, with better right, he expressed himself as the real mouthpiece of the army. The King interrupted him, in order to declare his appreciation of the step we had taken and the pleasure he felt at seeing us, adding that he regarded us as the firmest pillars of the State, and that it would always be a satisfaction to him to lean upon us. He rose from his chair at these words, and emphasised his meaning by placing one hand on my shoulder and the other upon that of one of my colleagues. We replied suitably.

The King presented us to the Duchess d'Angoulême,* to the Prince de Condé, and to the Duke of Bourbon. The Princess, whom I studied attentively, was dressed with the utmost simplicity; her demeanour and features were cold, thoughtful, and stamped with melancholy. I could not help identifying myself with her sad recollections, which were rendered still more poignant when, some days later, she went to the Tuileries and occupied the apartments of her unhappy mother. She herself told me this recently, when I returned to take up my abode in the Palace of the Legion of Honour, where both you and I, my son, experienced so terrible a loss.

The two Princes murmured a few words, which neither my comrades nor I could hear.

The King invited us to dinner with him. Scarcely were we seated at table than, raising his voice, he said:

'Messieurs les Maréchaux, I send you some vermouth, and drink to your health and that of the army.'

Fearing to neglect the proper etiquette, we rose and bowed to express our thanks. We ought to have replied by the cry of 'Vivat!' which was formerly customary; but we were not men of

* Daughter of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette. She was the only child of her parents who survived the Revolution, and helped her husband, the Duke d'Angoulême, in resisting Napoleon on his return from Elba. Napoleon said of her that 'she was the only man of her family.'—*Translator's note.*

former days, nor brought up at Court. However, we told the Prince de Poix, Captain of the Guards, that we had been in a difficulty, and that the fear of doing something incorrect had alone prevented us from drinking the King's health. He replied that it would have sufficed to ask his Majesty's permission to do so, but promised to tell him of our intentions, and of the praiseworthy motives of our discretion. On our return to the drawing-room the King was most agreeable and gracious to all of us. After giving the orders, he saluted us, and we retired, delighted with the reception given to us by his Majesty.

Next day, at the hour of Mass, we returned to the castle. The King sent for us one by one, and addressed to each some complimentary words; then, making conversation general, he told us that he knew the army needed reorganization, and that, in order to carry it out, he begged for our opinions. I imagine that it was because I was right in front of the King, and most immediately under his eyes, but whatever the reason, he said to me:

'Monsieur le Maréchal, what is yours?'

'Sire,' I replied, 'if your Majesty wishes for a plain opinion, deign to create a council of war, taking the presidency thereof into your own hands. Every plan will be prepared in a sectional committee for each branch of the service, discussed and decided upon by the council, and

remitted to the Minister for execution. As to appointments, a triple list will be drawn up by each section, discussed and decided upon at a general meeting of the sections, and transmitted to the Minister. From these lists he should select names for the approval of the King. This council should of necessity be composed of the heads of the army. Their experience in affairs, the knowledge they possess of the capacity and talents of their subordinates, will be a guarantee for good selections, and for justice and due regard to all. This council, however, should only have a consultative vote, so as to prevent a possibility of the recurrence of the difficulties experienced by that of 1787, which impeded Ministerial action. However, much good resulted from that council, among other things the exercises and manœuvres, which are still employed, and which only need to be modified and improved. The groundwork is so good that nothing better will ever be produced, although there are plenty of people quite ready to try.'

The other Marshals having said that that was also their opinion, the matter dropped.

The King then said that, if we were staying at Compiègne, he wished to see us at dinner. We expressed our thanks, but answered that we were anxious to return to Paris, in order to make his warm reception of us known to the army, as well as his kind inclinations towards it, and so we took

our leave. We were absolutely enchanted. We communicated to the generals and chief officers who had been under our command our hopes and the spirit with which we were animated.

On May 2 the King came from Compiègne to St. Ouen, where he slept, in order to make his entry into the capital. The inhabitants of Paris were ready to receive him with sincere and joyful demonstrations after reading a royal declaration dated from that place. We were invited thither, but remained forgotten during the reception of the foreign Monarchs, deputations, etc. At length the King sent for us, and excused himself by saying that he had not been informed of our arrival, and that, had he known of it, he certainly would not have kept us waiting. It would have been impossible to make a better reparation to us for the carelessness of his Court officials.

CHAPTER XV.

The King's Entry into Paris—The Old Guard—First Steps towards Unpopularity—The Council of War—Mismanagement—Parliamentary Independence—The Marshal's Nickname—The Legion of Honour.

THE declaration of St. Ouen had a wonderful effect upon the King's entry, which took place on May 4. A great majority of the population, even from the environs, crowded into the capital and greeted him with hearty acclamations. The Marshals had been summoned to join the procession. We surrounded the royal carriage, containing the Duchess d'Angoulême on the left of the King, and the Prince de Condé and the Duke of Bourbon facing him. His Majesty bowed graciously, and from time to time pointed out the Duchess to the longing eyes of the crowd, as though to say :

'See this unfortunate Princess; here she is, the only one who escaped the revolutionary axe!'

I saw some ladies at windows in the Rue St. Honoré so moved that they either fainted, or else pretended to.

The procession went to the Cathedral, where the King was present at the solemnization of a 'Te Deum' to return thanks, and then to the palace of the Tuileries. What memories must have rushed upon the royal family at sight of those walls, which still bore traces of the fury of August 10!

There was a great parade of troops in the courtyard, and among them were the remains of the Old Guard, who had been brought by a forced march, and, I believe, in one journey, from Fontainebleau. They had first been drawn up into line at the Porte St. Denis, without being allowed time to shave or wash themselves, and thence they had been brought at the double into the courtyard. It was believed that the King would pass through their ranks, but, whether from fatigue or indifference, he would pay no attention to this troop, although much pressed to do so. It was a great mistake, and sowed the first seeds of that discontent of which, ten months later, the fatal consequences were felt. This regiment was not even permitted to take the duty at the Tuileries, although one of their battalions had given every satisfaction at Compiègne, and had been on duty all the time the King remained there.

This neglect was deeply felt by these brave fellows, who had formerly had the privilege of alone guarding Napoleon and the *Château.** By

* The Tuileries palace was commonly known as the Château during the period of the Restoration.

another fatality, which was not without its influence upon their discontent, no lodgings or quarters had been provided for them; and when at length they succeeded in obtaining private billets, every door was shut. There was no ill-will in this; the fact was that everyone had gone out to see the King's entry, and had taken advantage of the fine weather to remain out-of-doors.

I was informed by a lady of my acquaintance, possessed both of good sense and courage, that on her return from a visit to her parents she found several grenadiers disputing with the porter, who refused to admit them, notwithstanding that their billets were in perfect order, because his masters had not come home. They merely asked leave to rest in his lodge until their return. In refusing this the inflexible Cerberus had apparently made use of some insulting expressions, for the soldiers had laid hands on him, and he would have had a very disagreeable experience had not my friend appeared, luckily for him. On learning the cause of the quarrel, she scolded the porter, threatened to have him dismissed, and, turning to the soldiers, said:

'My friends, it is abominable that you should be treated thus! Come in with me. You need refreshment, but everything is shut up. Porter, hasten to the baker, the pork-butcher, and the wine-merchant, and see that these brave men have everything they require immediately!'

Her presence disarmed the anger of the Guard, but she could not get them to cry, 'Long live the King!'

I suppose that many incidents of a similar nature occurred that day in Paris, and were not forgotten; and consequently, at the first news of Napoleon's landing, these soldiers remounted the tricoloured cockades and flocked to him. Much mistrust and many mistakes and follies contributed to increase the discontent.

The Dukes of Berry and Angoulême arrived soon after. The first, like his father, had had the good sense to put on the uniform of the National Guard; the second, on the other hand, was dressed in an English uniform! The Marshals had been commanded to go and meet him. The sight of his impolitic costume displeased us no less than his cold reception of us. He scarcely saluted us, and roughly asked his brother, at the same time pointing at us:

'Who is this? What is that man's name?'

He was also very coldly greeted himself, although there were many people in the streets; but they went rather out of curiosity, and the warmest feelings were frozen by the sight of the uniform of our bitterest enemies. This was perhaps increased by a rumour which had gained wide circulation, that he ill-treated, and even beat, the Princess. I repeat this statement, or rather this gossip, for what it is worth, because those

who have the best opportunities of observing remark, on the contrary, that this couple seem very fond of each other, full of tender respect and thought for each other; and this is especially noticeable in the Princess, for whom my respect, attachment and devotion are very deep.

A Council of War had just been created, I know not whether by the will of the King or whether his minister, having heard of the conversation at Compiègne, and fearing that it might be forced upon him, took the initiative. I incline towards the latter belief, simply on account of the various selections made among the lower grades, whereas it had been stated at Compiègne that it should only necessarily include the heads of the army, the Marshals, principal Controllers of Ordnance and Supplies, and some Generals who had commanded army-corps.

A few days later I went to the *Château*. The King was on his throne, but not in state; some few persons were in the hall, amongst others the Duke of Wellington. His Majesty, seated, wearing his hat and playing with his walking-stick, desired me to approach, and, after introducing the Duke to me, with whom I exchanged a few polite words, said:

'Well, you ought to be satisfied. I have formed a Council of War; what do you think of it?'

'Your Majesty's object has been missed,' I

answered. 'The Minister has composed it of soldiers dependent on him who are in want of employment or promotion, and who, on that very account, will be his very humble servants, docile to the opinions and wishes of his Excellency, so that your Majesty will never know anything except what it pleases the Minister to show.'

'You are right,' replied the King; 'I will change and correct that.'

The modification consisted in the addition of three Marshals, and I afterwards learned that the King insisted upon my being one of them. Dupont* had long known my independence, and our intimacy enabled me to superintend everything and say what I pleased. He would no doubt have been glad to avoid this alteration, which later on would have been of great service to him; but he could not keep me out after the formal expression of the King's wishes.

At length we met. The Minister entered, holding a sort of provisional plan, the nature of which we could not learn, for he said that his Majesty demanded the immediate attendance of the Council.

'You want to play us a trick, my friend,' said I; 'but take care, I will speak out before the King.'

* It seems strange that such a man should have been put over the greatest Marshals and Generals of France! *Vide infra*, p. 166, vol. ii., note.—*Translator's note.*

On reaching the *Château* our meeting began, under the presidency of the King, who had beside him Monsieur and his sons. Dupont sent to beg me to make no objection. He read his report, after which his Majesty asked for our opinions. When my turn came, I remarked that the report had been read too quickly for me to form any opinion, and asked that it might be printed, which was granted.

The Council of War was summoned to the *Château* for the second and last time. The printed copies of the report had been circulated just as we were starting for the Tuileries. Matters had been carefully arranged so that there should be no discussion.

In opening the meeting the King said that the breaking up of the armies had become so important that, since our first meeting, he had been obliged to order it, and to partition the regiments among the garrisons; that consequently our meeting became objectless for the moment; that he begged us to study the plan of organization; and, finally, that he would let us know his intentions later. We were never summoned again.

Thus vanished this dream of a Council of War, which, over and above the advantage of bringing together good opinions and experience, would have assured to the army that unity which is always so desirable—uniform instruction, precision,

good fellowship, and, above all, the best choice of officers. Instead of this, preference was given to favouritism, decorations and promotion were lavished upon the incapable and careless, while merit languished and vegetated in subordinate ranks; the old *noblesse* invaded everything, and deep-seated discontent began to ferment. The Princes also dispossessed, without any compensation, those who held the post of chief inspectors of the different Arms of the Service, and who ranked immediately after the Marshals.

The Legion of Honour, instituted as a reward for merit of every kind, was thrown open to everybody, and it became evident that the intention was to discredit and deprive it of any value. But I must say that the Order of St. Louis was distributed with equal prodigality. The royal Government behaved like an invalid, who allows everything to take its chance without any supervision.

I have anticipated events, however, and travelled far from my Council of War. The sitting was occupied with narratives of military events, and parallels drawn between opposing Generals. The King took considerable interest in the conversation, and after some hours declared the sitting closed.

During the brief existence of the Council of War, another political body was deliberating upon and discussing the constitutional Charter, based

upon the declarations of St. Ouen. The Legislative Body of the Empire had been temporarily preserved. The ancient peerage, re-established but enlarged, formed, as in England, the Upper Chamber; the other one took the name of Chamber of Departmental Deputies.

I was created a peer, and at the royal sitting of June 4 took the oath; at the first business meeting of the Upper Chamber, I was elected one of the *Secrétaires du bureau*. The drawback to this distinction is that one must be very assiduous, and that one is very much tied, and I soon became so tired of it that, notwithstanding many requests, I have always since declined the honour.

The military divisions were erected into governorships. I had the twenty-first, of which the principal town was Bourges. I had been given my choice, and had taken that, as it brought me near my property. At the same time all the Marshals were appointed Knights of St. Louis, and successively Commanders and Grand-Crosses of this military Order, which was revived, as were the other ancient Orders, without abrogation of the law abolishing them: such was the tendency to absolutism.

The object of the first Bill brought before the Chamber of Peers was to correct the abuses of the press. I fancied I discovered in it a violation of Article 8 of the Charter. I spoke and voted

against it, and my little speech was considered very military. Notwithstanding strong opposition, the Bill passed by a majority of one, the numbers being fifty-six for and fifty-five against! This happened merely because one of my intimate friends, who had promised to vote with us against it, wrote 'yes' on his voting-paper. I saw him do it, and tried to seize the paper, but he had just time to drop it into the ballot-box. We should have had the majority on our side but for that. By what little threads do the destinies of Bills hang!

It is one of the functions of the *Secrétaires du bureau* to lay before the King the Bills that have passed. On receiving us, and after a few words addressed to one or two amongst us, Louis XVIII. spoke to me in a severe tone, fixing upon me his eyes, which were penetrating as those of a lynx:

'Monsieur le Maréchal, I am surprised at your having spoken and voted against this measure. When I take the trouble to draft a Bill, I have good reasons for wishing it to pass.'

'Sire,' I replied, 'your Majesty did not take me into confidence with regard to your Bills. They ought all to pass if they are drawn up by your Majesty. If the initiative is to belong to your Majesty alone, they might as well simply be registered, and we might remain dumb like the former Legislative Body. If, however, I have correctly understood the intentions of the Charter,

it gives to every individual freedom of opinion and vote. I fancied that in this Bill I discovered a violation of Article 8, and I employed that liberty conscientiously, as I shall always do.'

The King made no answer, bowed to us, and we retired. Scarcely had we left the presence when the Chancellor said to me:

'Monsieur le Maréchal, was that the proper way to address the King?'

'What do you mean,' I retorted; 'did I fail in respect to his Majesty?'

'No, not exactly; but you should have been more reserved, less blunt.'

'By which you mean that I should either have concealed the truth or displayed regret. I have never learned to twist myself, and I pity the King if what he ought to know be kept from him. I shall always speak to him honestly, and serve him in the same manner.'

The King showed me his resentment for some time, but afterwards treated me with the same politeness as heretofore, and, when he came to know me better, was not displeased with my bluntness, although he was King. I have been told of his saying on several occasions:

'His Outspokenness tells me such and such a thing.'

The Court was daily losing ground in public opinion. It seemed as though the Ministry and their agents were vying with each other as to

which should give proof of the greatest folly, and the surroundings of the King as to which should exhibit the greatest haughtiness and conceit.

At this time the office of the Legion of Honour was presided over by a priest, the Abbé de Pradt, formerly chaplain of the god Mars. He suppressed the orphanages, which are now branches of the royal house at St. Denis. The relations of the pupils, their friends, and the members of the Order complained aloud, and numerous petitions were presented to the Chambers. I was a member of the committee of my Chamber, and was ordered to report upon those which put forward just complaints. I arranged with the person chosen by the other Chamber to report, and we proceeded to make inquiries—first at the Legion of Honour itself. The Chancellor of the Order informed us that economy alone had prompted the King to take this step. The reason was a weak one, as educational establishments had as much right to public money as the members of the Order. Had they been treated with the barest justice, the subscriptions to them should only have been reduced by half; but more consideration should have been shown to widows and their children, because, in losing their husbands and fathers, they had lost their only means of support. We said that we should state to the proper quarter our reasons for advising the repeal of this impolitic order of suppression. The Abbé admitted that there was some truth in

what we said; but he thought that the order was too recent to allow of its revocation by the King, and begged us to let a short time elapse before bringing it about.

'No doubt,' I said, 'and meanwhile the children will be sent away, the furniture sold, and later on it will be said that the funds are so low that they will not admit of the re-establishment of these houses. Monsieur l'Abbé,' I continued, 'you are concealing your real motives from us; we have a duty to perform; how we perform it must depend upon the amount of confidence you place in us. Speak.'

He again protested that there were no reasons save that of economy; but from his hesitating manner we saw that he was deceiving us.

As we could get nothing more out of him, we went to the Superioress of the orphanage. She had as good grounds for complaint against the Chancellor as Madame Campan,* whose establishment at Écouen had been suppressed, but most of the pupils in her house had been, at any rate, transferred to that of St. Denis. The suppression of the house at Écouen had been hurried on, in order that the property might be given to the Prince de Condé, although it had been given in perpetuity to the Legion of Honour by the sinking-fund

* Whose Memoirs of the Court and private life of Marie Antoinette have been published both in France and England.

(*caisse d'amortissement*), which had, I believed, purchased it from the State.

The Superioress had had difficulties with the Chancellor, and attributed the suppressions to the personal dislike of the Abbé. She told us that, having gone one day to the Grand Almoner to ask his protection for her community and pupils, the Chancellor had come in, and had been very angry with her for giving any information or details without his knowledge. She felt certain that the Abbé's action arose from motives of personal animosity and a desire to avenge himself. She also complained of his correspondence, saying that she was thwarted in every attempt she made to improve the position of her pupils. It was quite likely that some of her complaints were coloured by feminine bitterness; we took heed of nothing, except what could help us to discover the real reasons for this suppression.

We went next to the Grand Almoner, who told us that the Chancellor had been very much irritated at the visit paid to him by the Superioress, and at her prayers for support and protection, but added that the Abbé had always told him that the pecuniary position of the Legion required this economical step.

We agreed not to notice the complaints of the Superioress, seeing that they were personal, and perhaps exaggerated, and to take as the basis of our respective reports the impolitic despotism

with which the suppression had been effected, for, as I have already said, the educational houses had the same privileges as the members of the Order, having been created at the same time. Moreover, a few years later public money had been specially devoted to them, independently of their general funds. This annual contribution still exists, but other needs and circumstances appear to have interfered with its application.

The feelings of the members of the Order and of all the soldiers were very clearly expressed; a portion of the public echoed them, not only in connection with this administrative action, but with many other causes of complaint. What was the use of nourishing this discontent? It seemed to me that the important thing for us was to obtain the repeal of the order. Would speeches help us? They would probably only increase the opposition. The idea then recurred to me of negotiating the matter with the Minister responsible for the Legion of Honour. I suggested this to my colleague. He was a warm partisan of the opposition, a good fellow at heart, with excellent qualities; I had known him a long time. At the first mention of my proposal, he shook his head, but I soon brought him round, and without very much difficulty, adding that, if our negotiation failed, our hands would be strengthened. We agreed, therefore, to draw up our reports as though they were to be laid before our respective Chambers,

and to seek an audience with the Minister of the King's household.

Monsieur de Blacas received us immediately; and seemed surprised, because he believed, as he told us, that the measure had been taken in the interests of the Order; he had not really investigated the matter, and had confined himself to laying before the King the report and proposed ordinance that the Chancellor had sent him. He opened a drawer and showed us the original report, and also the budget of the Order, which had not required him to make any profound calculations, for the proposal to reduce the salaries by half could be carried out by a stroke of the pen. We asked him to lay our reports before the King, and to let us know his Majesty's intentions with regard to our request for the repeal of the ordinance.

Some hours later the King sent for us, but the deputy was nowhere to be found. As punctuality was necessary at the audience, I went alone. Monsieur de Blacas was with the King, and no one else. When I entered his Majesty rose, gave me his hand, and said :

'My dear Marshal, I thank you for the delicate manner in which you have set to work to enlighten and inform me of the truth. I only approved the measure because I was assured that it was in the interests of the Order; the true reasons, which you have put in so clear a light, were not given to

me. Therefore, it is with the greatest pleasure and alacrity that I revoke my ordinance.'

I thanked the King in the name of the Order and of the families interested, and added:

'Had your Majesty been better informed, you would, I feel sure, have maintained, or even created, these establishments, had they not been already in existence.'

'Certainly I would,' said the King; 'and in order to give you, my dear Marshal, a token of my satisfaction and confidence, I charge you with the task of drawing up the ordinance and re-establishing the orphanages.'

I withdrew highly pleased. On reaching home, I found my colleague, Baron Lefebvre, formerly Intendant-General of the army, and at that time occupying the same post in the Parisian National Guard. When he heard my story and the success of our common efforts, he lost his temper because he had thus missed his opportunity of declaiming against the arbitrary abuse of power, and had had nothing for his pains but the trouble of drawing up his report.

When my work was done, I took it to the Minister, who said:

'The Abbé de Pradt knows all that has been going on, and is afraid. He has asked the King for leave of absence, and his Majesty is very much inclined to comply with his request, only with an extension to perpetuity.'

The ordinance was published in the next day's *Moniteur*, and produced great delight, especially among those interested; but this triumph cost the Legion a large sum of money. Most of the pupils had been sent, with all their outfit, to their relations, who did not care to bring them back to school, and preferred to enjoy, until their twenty-first year, the modest pension of 250 francs (£10) which was allowed them to continue their education. It was, therefore, necessary to nominate fresh pupils and provide each with an outfit.

Shortly afterwards a golden bridge was built for the Abbé de Pradt in order to bring about his resignation. He was granted a pension of 10,000 francs (£400) and the *grand cordon*, and this produced a very bad effect, which was heightened by the appointment of his successor, a general officer, a former *émigré* attached to the Court, and the favourite, it was said, of the heir to the Crown.

CHAPTER XVI.

Universal Discontent — Indifference of the Government — Question of the Indemnities—Reception of the Duke and Duchess of Angoulême—A Disquieting Summons—Landing of Napoleon—Monsieur at Lyons—Mutinous Troops.

DEBATES in the Chambers, violent party spirit, universal distrust of the Court, regiments infested with *émigrés*, privileged bodies, in which the best places were prostituted to boys who had scarcely left school, while old and excellent officers, bending under the weight of years, and scarred by honourable wounds, were vegetating on half-pay, ignored and almost despised by the new-comers—such was the general condition of affairs. The State could no longer profit by the revolutionary confiscations, for a simple ordinance had replaced the members of the royal family in possession of the lands not already sold.

Although the principle of the measure was just, the form in which it was introduced was wrong. It should have proposed a complete repeal of all the laws of the Revolution with respect to national property. The ordinance of restitution,

therefore, excited great discontent and much alarm. The former possessors worried and threatened the purchasers, amongst whom the most timid consented to friendly arrangements, transactions and indemnities, but they were not even then quite reassured. The majority kept possession, and threatened in return. The clergy, who since the Consulate had only been salaried, now wished to recover their property; but there was a great difference: they only had the usufruct of it, and so they were allowed to complain notwithstanding the insults and attacks that were uttered from every pulpit, the threats of eternal perdition made in every confessional to the weak or the dying, if they did not restore their lands and bequeath them to the Church.

On the other hand, the soldiers murmured at having lost their extra pay for service abroad, and saw with jealousy their more favoured comrades who retained theirs on the canals. Of course, those in the highest places made the loudest outcry. All positions are relative; like them I had lost the endowments that had been given me in Naples and Poland, but I had had the good sense to consider this increase of comfort as merely temporary, and I regretted it the less therefore.

The Government seemed utterly indifferent to this state of things, and did nothing to remedy it. It only appeared to be carrying on constant petty underhand intrigues on behalf of its supporters,

and more ostensible ones on behalf of its members. One of the boldest among them insulted France and the national army with its 'right line,' in the Chamber; another, weak, wily and ambitious, issued a police order which covered him with ridicule; an ex-minister of the Empire, so servilely, so abjectly devoted to his master, but not less ambitious than the other, ventured, in the Chamber of Peers, to pronounce these words, so agreeable to absolute ears:

'What the King wills, the Law wills.' (*'Si veut le Roi! si veut la Loi!'*)

Amid these various conflicts and discontents, and this feeling of discomfort, moderate men of sensible and conciliatory dispositions united, and sought means to calm this effervescence. The best plan, it was thought, to restore confidence and tranquillity, to revive security, and provide a guarantee for purchasers, and to improve the positions of donees, would consist in an equitable indemnity for all goods sold, the restitution of unalienated goods, and the division of the indemnities among the donees, beginning with the most needy. The State had profited by the confiscations, therefore the State owed the indemnities; nothing could be more rigorously just. I felt this, and perhaps expressed it more strongly than others, and was consequently requested to make a proposal to the Chamber of Peers, where it was thought that my voice would be better heard, that,

my words being listened to more favourably, would produce more effect, rally more supporters round the proposal, and do much to ensure its success.

I fought against the proposal for a long time, but yielded at last to the consideration that I might be able to render a real service to the public and to the unfortunate soldiers.

A Director of Customs had the kindness to furnish me with an important memorandum, showing how the lands had been valued to the prejudice of the *émigrés*, those condemned to death or transported. Several of the people—Monsieur Ouvrard among the number—gave me good suggestions, which were of value to me for the development of the proposal. Everyone contributed his utmost. Sémonville and Monsieur de Castellane gave me the benefit of their experience and opinions, as did also the Duc de Lévis, who was my colleague in the Chamber. He and I had several interviews upon the subject; the Duke, being hard pressed by his creditors, was personally interested in the success of the proposal.

It has been since said that Sémonville took the principal part in this matter, and there is some truth in the statement, as it was he who first mentioned the idea of indemnities to me. But other persons were interested in it, and it was in consequence of their union and their common support

that I undertook to introduce the subject, as reporter of the commission which commanded the opinion of the majority.

After hearing the proposal, hope rose in many breasts, but several people were much disappointed. People who had cherished the idea that the Restoration would mean absolute restitution with interest came to me, the Duke of Fitz-James among others. He said :

'All or nothing!'

'Very good, Duke,' I replied ; 'then it will be nothing.'

Then the soldiers, especially Marshal Ney, complained that I had restricted the indemnities to the humblest classes, whereas, they said, the rich had equal rights.

'I have thrown down a plank,' I answered ; 'everyone will get across in turn. Had I done otherwise people would have been afraid. Besides, observe the difference: they who have been dispossessed by confiscation demand justice, while they who have been endowed have lost through the fortune of war, which also brought them their wealth. Their fortune was simply an act of favour, whereas the others had everything torn from them by the Revolution, with its blood, its horrors, its persecutions, its injustice, and its iniquities. It rests with you to bring up amendments and support them ; I shall make no opposition.'

My proposition was afterwards referred to a committee, of which I was naturally one of the members; but after a few meetings it was found impossible to come to any conclusion, for the torrent of claims for indemnification opened such a chasm that Europe itself would have been inadequate to fill it. The final result was the law of December 5, 1814, allowing restitution for unsold property; the rest was adjourned.

During the session I had taken more or less part in political discussions. The following was no less fertile in important debates, into which I was naturally drawn by my position.

Secret discontent was increasing, especially in the army. The Congress of Vienna '*dansait et n'avançait pas*,' as the Prince de Ligne wittily remarked. Austria showed herself haughty, vain, ambitious, and pretentious. Monsieur de Talleyrand, the French plenipotentiary, recommended his Government quietly to make some military dispositions, to send some troops to the frontiers under pretext of change of garrisons.

The Princes of the Royal Family made various journeys through the departments, the object of which was to attract supporters to the royal cause. But wherever they went they failed by their own fault, in spite of the prodigality of their promises and the prostitution of decorations, especially of the Legion of Honour, which grievously hurt old soldiers who received none.

They were all given to intriguers, and to partisans of the moment. To such an extent was the abuse carried, as well as the indifference to every good feeling, that they were distributed by dozens to prefects and sub-prefects, who decorated their friends, their flatterers, and their creditors with them! The Princes were only surrounded by men of their own party, saw none but men of the old régime, displayed the barest politeness to the authorities who had not been removed for want of men to replace them. Thus their Highnesses learned nothing, saw nothing, since they saw only through the eyes of people who were passionately attached to the old order of things; hence arose violent murmurs and discontent.

The Duke and Duchess of Angoulême were sent to Bordeaux, and had to pass through the departments belonging to my government. I went to the chief town in order to do the honours to them. I received their Royal Highnesses at the frontier of the department of Cher on February 28, 1815, and accompanied them to the boundaries of that of Dordogne. I was very kindly received by them, especially by the Duchess. The recollection of her misfortunes bound me strongly to this Princess, and I vowed to her a devotion which has never faltered for an instant; until now I have always had cause to be gratified by her constant marks of kindness. There were perhaps rather fewer decorations

than usual during this journey, and some of them, owing to my intervention, were well placed.

I returned to Bourges on March 5, intending to pass my time between that place and Courcelles, which was only twenty leagues off; but twenty-four hours after my arrival, during the night of the 6th, a courier brought me orders to betake myself immediately to Nîmes, to receive fresh instructions from the Duke of Angoulême, whom I had just quitted, and, as a preliminary measure, to march all the troops in my government to Villefranche, in the department of the Rhone. The ministerial despatch gave no reasons either for this precipitate movement or for my departure. The same courier was bearer of a packet for the Duke of Angoulême addressed to Bourges, though his itinerary ought to have made it clear that by that time—the evening of the 5th—the Prince should be at Libourne. I racked my brains to discover what extraordinary events could have happened, and naturally concluded that it was the result of the Prince de Talleyrand's requests from Vienna for decided demonstrations on the frontiers, and I thought that the massing of troops at Villefranche and Nîmes was intended to show that France had means at command to support her demands against Austria. I imagined that similar gatherings were taking place in the departments on the

Rhine and on the northern frontiers, but I was very far out in my reckoning.

During the night of March 7, a report from General du Coëtlosquet, Commandant of Nevers, to Lieutenant-General Lepic, his direct superior at Bourges, and which was at once communicated to me, announced the landing of Napoleon and the arrival of Monsieur, brother of the King, on his way to Lyons. All my former conjectures fell to pieces. I was thunderstruck by this intelligence, and then predicted the misfortunes which have since settled upon France.

I started a few hours later. Had I received the Minister's packet when near Limoges, I should have gone direct from there to Nîmes by the Toulouse road ; but I had come back to Bourges, and the road by Lyons was more direct.

On reaching La Charité, I learned that the Duke of Orleans had just changed horses there, hastening on his way to join Monsieur, who had a start of twenty-four hours. I was anxious to catch up this Prince, whom I had known in the first campaign of the Revolution, when he was serving with the army of Dumouriez, to whom I was acting as aide-de-camp. Fortunately, he stopped to have luncheon at Pougues, otherwise I could not have caught him, as I had had great difficulty in procuring horses at La Charité, because the Prince travelled with three carriages.

He told me all that had been known in Paris

before his departure, from the landing of Napoleon and his rapid march upon Grenoble, which it was believed would resist him.

'At any rate,' I said, 'we can count upon General Marchand, as he hates Napoleon personally, and is his declared enemy. Therefore you may count upon his fidelity as well as upon his endeavours to resist and avenge himself.'

This General was in command of the 7th military division.

I travelled with the Prince as far as Moulins; there we had to part company for want of horses, and I was obliged to wait for the return of his, so that he had a start of several hours.

At the last stage, while the horses were being changed, I received a letter from Monsieur, who had just learned from the Duke of Orleans that I was following him, in which he begged me to lose no time in reaching Lyons. He sent me also a confidential letter, written by the Captain of his Guards, Count des Cars, to say that his position was very precarious, that Napoleon had advanced so rapidly as to be within one day's march of Lyons, and that the garrison showed such bad feeling that he could not trust it to defend the passage of the Rhone.

I entered the postmaster's house in order to read and answer this letter. So well had the secret of its contents been kept, that, on coming out of the house to give my letter to the courier,

I found a large gathering of engineers collected, and to them the courier was relating all that was known at Lyons concerning the march of events and the spirit of the garrison! This was confirmed by the postilion, and was practically the contents of my letter from Count des Cars.

I started at last and very rapidly, but just outside the town an axle of my carriage broke, and it upset. I was none the worse for my fall, but the accident occasioned a fresh loss of time, as I was obliged to walk the rest of the way. On reaching the hotel where I was in the habit of stopping, I found two officers waiting to conduct me to the house of the Governor, where Monsieur had dined; a third came up immediately afterwards to bring me to the presence of his Royal Highness.

It was between nine and ten o'clock on March 9. The authorities of the town, as well as the generals and colonels, were with Monsieur. He knew from the Duke of Orleans that I was on the way to Nîmes.

'The roads are intercepted,' he said to me, 'and you can no longer pass. Remain with us, take the command; I give you plenary powers.'

The Prince then told me that no reliance could be placed upon the troops, and that he had given orders to evacuate the town early next morning. My surprise was extreme.

'Abandon Lyons!' I exclaimed; 'where, then,

will you stop after quitting the barrier of the Rhone?'

'We have neither ammunition nor guns,' he replied; 'the troops have declared plainly that they will offer no resistance, and the majority of the population is with them and against us.'

The situation beyond a doubt was very serious and critical.

'Let us try something first,' I said; 'let us suspend our retreat; we can always come back to that if necessary, for, if Napoleon is within a march of the town, let him make as much speed as he likes, he cannot arrive until between one and two o'clock in the day, as he has to lead wearied soldiers. Let us assemble our men at six in the morning, see them, speak to them; we may gain something by it. We will try to change their opinion by attacking them on the subject of their honour, always a delicate point with a Frenchman. We will explain to them the misfortunes that must result from a civil war, and the danger to France, no less great, of seeing all Europe raised in arms against her for the second time.'

My advice was unanimously agreed to, and orders were given to countermand the evacuation, and to summon all the garrison to meet next morning in the Place Bellecour. Having accepted the command, I ordered that all communication between the two banks of the Rhone should

cease; that all boats should be brought over to our side and moored there; that strong outposts should be placed on the right bank and along the roads; that the Morand and De la Guillotière bridges should be barricaded and put into the best state of defence that time would permit; and, finally, that a succession of patrols and reconnoitring parties should be sent out so as to give us the promptest information. In a word, I made all the dispositions that can be made in a campaign when troops are in front of the enemy. Particular commands were assigned; each officer had a certain number of troops and posts to establish and watch. These points settled, I finished by ordering a ration of brandy to be served out before the review, and we separated.

On reaching my hotel, accompanied by the generals in command, I asked them to speak to their chief officers and to do their best to induce the men to give Monsieur a good reception at the review. I spent the night in giving orders and obtaining information.

Between three and four in the morning General Brayer, who had command of one of the territorial subdivisions, came to me; he had served with me through part of the campaign of 1813 and that of 1814. He came to tell me that the men refused to be reviewed by the Princes, but that they would be delighted to see me, their old General. I was thunderstruck at this news.

'Who can have put that idea into their heads?' I asked. 'Are we on the eve of a fresh revolution? Is every bond of discipline relaxed?'

'No,' he answered; 'they have been excited by some public-house speeches; the officers are not less excited. So many follies have already been committed! So little interest has been taken in the soldiers, and so many injustices done in order to make places for *émigrés*, *chouans*, and Vendeans, upon whom rank, honours, and distinctions have been showered!'

'From your manner,' I said, 'I gather that you share these opinions.'

'I do,' he replied; 'I agree with them; but I will do my duty to the end.'

(You will very shortly see, my son, how that duty was performed.)

'It is getting late,' continued Brayer; 'it is more than time to warn Monsieur not to appear before the troops, to prevent him from being insulted and received without respect.'

I rapidly considered all the consequences that this might produce; but how could I undertake to make such a communication to his Royal Highness? What would happen if he attempted to brave this warning, as he very likely would? A brilliant idea occurred to me, and I promptly set about carrying it into effect.

On entering Monsieur's apartments I found his officers standing about waiting till he awoke. I

remarked that the communication I had to make to him would brook no delay; Count des Cars entered his bedroom and announced me. I told his Royal Highness that the reports I had received during the night regarding the state of mind of the men were no better, and that I had thought that his presence might be a constraint upon them; that perhaps it would be better if I saw them alone, being accustomed to war and soldiers, and being one of themselves—to use an expression in vogue at that time; that they could express their opinions more freely, and that I would send to let him know at the earliest favourable opportunity. From this the Prince could guess or penetrate my real motive; he learned it later, but not from me. I returned to my rooms to wait till the troops were drawn up in the Place Bellecour.

I was vexed that the weather was wet, but I was still more annoyed on learning that no rations had been served out, that it had been impossible to find during the night either the Commissary-General to sign the orders for the regiments, or the storekeeper to give out the brandy.

At the time fixed for the review, General Brayer came to fetch me; he had brought me a horse, and we started in pouring rain. As we reached the Place, on the right of the troops, acclamations broke out, and were repeated as I rode down the lines. Many inquisitive people mingled their

voices with those of the men, but no other name or titles except my own were distinguishable.

This beginning seemed to me a good omen; I was deceived by it, and soon found out the fact. I ordered a square to be formed, and rode into the middle of it, so as to be the better heard by everyone.

I began by thanking them for their reception of me, flattering myself that it arose from a recollection of the care that, from duty as well as from attachment to my men, I had always taken of their comfort; this has been the constant preoccupation of my long military career. I continued by saying that I highly recognised their loyal services, their devotion in good and bad fortune; that though we had succumbed at last, it had at any rate been with honour, and that it had required all the armies of Europe, as well as some great blunders on our own side, which could not be imputed to us, to bring about results that could not have been prevented. I added that they all knew that I had been the last to submit, and that thus we had fulfilled our obligations, but that, released by the will of the nation, we had contracted others, not less sacred, to which the Royal Government would find us equally loyal; that the invasion that had collected us at Lyons would let loose upon our fatherland misfortunes even greater than those of the previous year, since then ancient France had remained intact; but this time the

allies would make us pay dearly for a fresh appeal to arms. I cannot remember what more I said to stir these men; they heard me in silence.

I was very excited. I finished my speech by saying that I had too good an opinion of their fidelity and patriotic feelings to think that they would refuse to do as I did, who had never deceived them, and that they would follow me along the path of honour and duty; the only guarantee that I asked of them was to join with me in crying: 'Long live the King!' I shouted this several times at the top of my voice. Not one single voice joined me. They all maintained a stony silence; I admit that I was disconcerted.

My attempts on the other squares were equally fruitless. The word seemed to have been given to all the troops.

While making similar attempts on the cavalry, I sent for Monsieur, hoping that, notwithstanding what had been reported to me during the night, he would be received respectfully, if not cordially, as I had at first been. I also wished that the Prince should be a witness of my endeavours, and that our common efforts might succeed in overcoming this obstinate and dreary silence; but we failed a second time. We had come to the last regiment, the 14th Dragoons, if I remember rightly. The Prince went up to an old and decorated trooper, spoke to him kindly, and praised him for his courage, of which he bore the

proofs on his breast. The dragoon—I can see him now — stood motionless, impassive, with staring eyes and open mouth. His Colonel and several officers, who were shouting 'Long live the King!' with us, addressed him by name, exhorted and pressed him, but he remained unshaken. Monsieur was crimson with anger, but had the good sense not to show it.

We did not let the troops march past, but sent them straight to their respective positions and quarters, arranging for the defence of the bridges and fords over the Rhone as though in presence of an enemy. I then told Monsieur that we might perhaps be more successful if we made another attempt upon the officers by themselves. They also had displayed coldness, but they might have felt some awkwardness in presence of their men.

I therefore gave orders that they should all assemble in my rooms, from the General down to the youngest Sub-lieutenant. I begged his Royal Highness meanwhile to visit all the bridges, so as to make sure that the defence works agreed upon the previous evening had been carried out. The Prince liked the idea, and started for the Rhone, while I went to the meeting.

CHAPTER XVII.

Meeting of Officers—Grounds of Complaint—Departure of Monsieur — A Stratagem — Illusory Hopes — A Critical Moment — Retreat — A Hasty Flight — General Digeon's Terror—A Hard Ride.

THERE was such a large muster that my rooms could not contain all who were present; the staircases were crowded. I entered upon my subject by saying all I could think of best calculated to stir their loyalty, no longer foreshadowing, but proving to absolute certainty, all the dire misfortunes that would come upon France and themselves. I saw that they were very animated, excited and eager. The bitterest and most stinging reproaches were heaped, often disrespectfully, not only upon the Government, but upon the King and Royal Family. Loud were the complaints made of prodigality, unfair distribution of promotions and decorations, neglect, and contempt of former services. I, of course, tried to lay these faults at the door of the ignorance and intrigue by which the throne was surrounded;*

* In 1814, when Masséna was presented at Court, or when he went to take leave of the King on departing for his command

further, I said that the King, whose intentions were good and pure, would, when he was better informed, apply a prompt remedy to these grounds of complaint, which I undertook to communicate to him, and for which we would find redress, but at this moment our country was to be served and saved.

Vainly did I exhaust myself for two hours, holding my ground against all these men, who, without personal rudeness to me, spoke their minds very freely. It was easy to see why the troops had remained so silent; they took their cue from their officers. There were several grounds of complaint referred to *ad nauseam*, and one of these was the formation of the King's Household, a corps of officers taken exclusively, and most unwisely, from the ranks of the old aristocracy, with the exception of one or two representatives of the new nobility. What was called a 'trooper' ranked as an officer, nay, as a superior officer; a Sub-Lieutenant of the Household was a Lieutenant-Colonel, and so on.

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at Marseilles, the great personages by whom his Majesty was surrounded cleared but very narrow space for him to pass through. He had no sooner delivered a few words than he found himself without the circle. Masséna frequently alluded to the clever way in which they cut him off and separated him from the King. 'When I was on the field of battle,' said he, 'I did not employ so much dexterity in making my prisoners.'—Madame Campan's 'Memoirs' (edition of 1883), vol. i., p. 61.

Complaints upon this subject were, unfortunately, well founded; and their anger at seeing a lot of beardless boys dressed in uniforms resplendent with gold lace, and nearly all decorated with ribands, and with the epaulettes of superior officers, was excusable. I repeat that all they said upon this subject, allowing for some exaggeration, had foundation in fact; but I could not succeed in making them understand that, in our critical position and difficult circumstances, the destiny of the country depended absolutely and entirely upon them. They had made up their minds to take their chance of that. They were determined not to fire upon the Grenoble troops that had deserted. I succeeded in extracting from them a promise to hold their positions and to retaliate if they were attacked, but this promise seemed to me weak, and was given with a very bad grace.

There was nothing more to be gained, and I was worn out with the long and profitless discussion, so I dismissed the officers, and only kept back a few Generals who thought with me. We went together to Monsieur; from our sad and downcast looks he guessed that our attempts had failed. In giving him an account of what had passed, I told him that we could not reckon upon any defence being made, that discontent and bitterness had taken possession of every heart, and that, as his Royal Highness's presence was

no longer necessary, I begged him to depart at once.

'And what will you do?' he asked.

'I shall stay where I am; I have nothing to fear from the soldiers, but I fear there may be danger for you.'

'No,' he answered; 'I shall stay, if you will not come with me. After the proofs of devotion you have given, I will not leave you alone exposed to the turn of events.'

'I repeat, Monseigneur, that I am running no risk; you have given me the command, I will exercise it to the last moment. Some incident may arise favourable to your cause; I will seize and turn it to advantage. But in Heaven's name start; time is flying.'

He seemed inclined to remain, and I appealed to the officers to support me. The Duke of Orleans, who was present, also declared his intention of remaining, with or without Monsieur. The latter eventually yielded, but required the Duke of Orleans to accompany him, an order which he had regretfully to obey. At length Monsieur decided to get into his carriage. He charged me to send counter-orders to the troops on the road to Lyons, so as not to bring them into contact with the garrison. Their dispositions were supposed to be better, but an electric spark seemed to have produced the same feelings all through the army.

Monsieur told me that he had passed along the quays and bridges of the Rhone, that no defensive preparations whatever had been made, that he had distributed money in order to hasten the work, and that he had received a promise that it should be begun at once.

At last, to my great relief, I saw him start, escorted by some mounted National Guards,* some gendarmes, and a detachment of the 14th Dragoons. His departure took a great weight off me, for the presence of the Princes had become very embarrassing. If they had been taken by Napoleon or arrested by the garrison, they would have been held as hostages for his personal safety; and had such an event occurred, royalist public opinion would have made me responsible. It would have gone even further, and accused me of giving them up. No doubt there would have been plenty of witnesses to justify me, including the Princes themselves, but the idea would have spread rapidly. It would have been impossible to refute it at first, and then one would have had to write volumes to destroy

* 'The mounted National Guard (who were known Royalists) deserted the Duc d'Artois at this crisis, and in his flight only one of them chose to follow him. Bonaparte refused their services when offered to him, and with a chivalrous feeling worthy of being recorded sent the decoration of the Legion of Honour to the single volunteer who had thus shown his fidelity by following the Duke.'—Bourrienne's 'Memoirs of Napoleon' (edition of 1885), vol. iii., p. 231.

it; for once the name of treason is pronounced, however innocent the accused or suspected person may be, violent men will refuse to be convinced, and will always believe that it had foundation in fact. I could quote many instances; I will give but one, the execrable assassination of the Duc de Berry.* All the evidence went to show that the crime had been conceived and carried out by the scoundrel who committed it, and by no one else. Even now there are plenty of these violent men who believe that this crime was the result of a conspiracy. The only satisfactory point in this terrible misfortune was the immediate arrest of the detestable murderer; had he not been taken, suspicion and distrust would have lain upon all the 'constitutional party,'† without exception. There are still a considerable number of people, on the opposite side, who believe it; but the opinion is losing ground, and remains only in a few of the densest heads. In spite of party differences and political animosity, there was but one voice throughout the land, and that was raised to call down the vengeance of the law for the punishment of this abominable crime.

* Second son of the Comte d'Artois (Charles X.), assassinated by Louvel, February 13, 1820.—*Translator's Note.*

† The term 'constitutional' (*constitutionnel*) is applied to all those who followed the Revolutionary movement while detesting its horrors, and who openly rallied themselves under the protecting shield of the Charter; the others are the inveterate adherents of the old régime and of absolute power.—*Note by Marshal Macdonald.*

Although I was somewhat calmed by the departure of the Princes, I was far from being tranquil. The minds of the men, of the officers, and, I must even add, of the generals of the 19th military division, seemed to become more excited as the decisive moment drew nearer. I sent for the Prefect and the Mayor, and while waiting for them telegraphed* a short message about the state of affairs to the Minister for War, of which he only received the heading:

'Marshal Macdonald to the Minister for War.'†

Monsieur had desired me to send it, and to announce his departure for Paris with the Duke of Orleans. I had also carried out the Prince's orders respecting the halting and retreat of the troops that were marching towards Lyons. I shortly afterwards learned that the Prefect had quitted the town; the Mayor alone arrived.

At the meeting of the officers they had promised me that if attacked they would fire in retaliation, but that they would not take the initiative. From that moment I resolved to bring the combat to close quarters; but as I was warned that our

* The semaphore telegraph had been brought to great perfection during the reign of Napoleon.

† This message was no doubt intentionally curtailed. Three years previously London had been thrown into dismay by a sudden fog coming on during the transmission of the semaphore signals from Plymouth, and for some hours a message remained incomplete, beginning, 'Wellington defeated at Salamanca . . .' [the corps of Marmont on July 22].

soldiers would not fire first, I thought that among so large a population as that of Lyons it would be easy to find twenty or thirty devoted men, or men who would be won over by the promise of gain and reward. It would only be necessary to dress them in the uniform of the National Guard; my plan was to place them at the advance posts, in front of the troops, to put myself at their head and fire the first shot. This stratagem might be successful, if the engagement became general, and our soldiers decided to imitate our shooters. I know from experience how very slight a matter will suffice to change men's opinions.

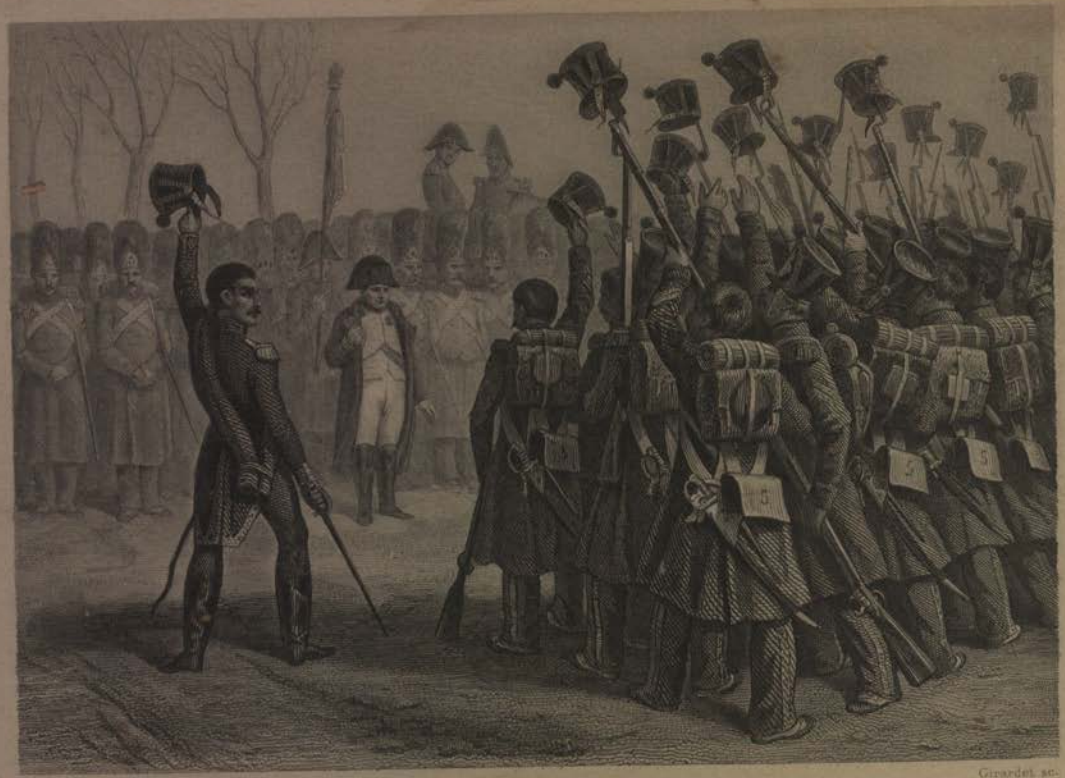
Hitherto Napoleon had met with no opposition.* A few battalions and squadrons only had joined him, but an unexpected resistance, although so far in the centre of France, at the entrance of a town of such importance, with the Rhone as a barrier, ought to make him reflect, and recall to

* The subjoined skit of the year 1815 may serve to show how the landing of Napoleon was regarded:

'What news? *Ma foi!*
The Tiger has broken out of his den.
The Monster was three days at sea.
The Wretch has landed at Fréjus.
The Brigand has arrived at Antibes.
The Invader has reached Grenoble.
The General has entered Lyons.
Napoleon slept last night at Fontainebleau.
The Emperor proceeds to the Tuileries to-day.
His Imperial Majesty will address his loyal subjects to-morrow.'

his mind the courageous defence made by the town against the Republican army.* The troops he brought back with him, wearied and disgusted with their sojourn in the island of Elba, must have before their eyes the fear of being sent back thither, and the dread of an even severer punishment. Finally the garrisons of Grenoble and Vienne, seduced and led away as they had been, might recognise that they had made a mistake, and repent of it. Such were my illusions; but, weak as was my hope, what would happen to Napoleon if my dream came even partially true? What proves that my reasoning was not entirely without sense is, that when I was at Bourges, after the submission of the army, I heard from the grenadiers who had been in Elba, and who were garrisoned there, that they had been delighted to return to France, and that if they had met with the slightest resistance, the smallest obstacle, or even a single shot, they would have thrown down their arms and sued for mercy. This I heard from all ranks, men, officers, even the Commander himself. This is not a story invented after the occurrence, and founded upon the admissions of the battalion, for all those then at Lyons were aware of my plan, and I have often related it since that time both on my return to Paris from Lyons and afterwards.

* In 1793. This is a post factum expression of opinion.



Girardet sc.

Raffet del.

THE ARRIVAL OF THE EMPEROR AT GRENOBLE

Paris, for Richard Bentley and Son 1892

Printed by Ch. Wittmann, Paris

When the Mayor entered my room, I told him of my intention. He was the only civil official who had remained at his post. I was surprised at hearing him answer that he would not be able to find one single man to do what I wanted.

'It is impossible,' I cried, 'that a town which defended itself so valiantly in 1793 in support of the Royal cause should not now contain one single veteran of that date burning with the same zeal?'

The Mayor shook his head. I dismissed him.

After having arranged an appearance of defence, and even offence, if I could only succeed in bringing my troops back to their duty, I rode in the company of the Governor, Viscount Digeon, Count Jules de Polignac (Monsieur's aide-de-camp, whom he had left at my disposal), some other Generals and staff-officers, to visit the posts, and to see for myself what obstacles had been prepared to stop the advance of Napoleon. I was not surprised to find that little or nothing had been done; the money that Monsieur had distributed had been quietly pocketed. The communications between the banks had not been interrupted; the order to bring the boats across and moor them on our side and to guard certain fords had not been carried out. The same remark applies to the reconnoitring parties, which should have been sent out to announce the approach of

Napoleon's scouts. This piece of neglect made me particularly angry, and I severely scolded the general officer charged with this duty. I sent out myself some patriots in echelon, and after making a few more arrangements, I went from the Guillotière bridge to the Morand bridge. The disaffection that I met everywhere gave me good grounds for fearing a complete desertion and a catastrophe; I therefore gave private orders to have the horses put to my carriage and to have it taken to the beginning of the suburb of Vaise, at the junction of the roads towards the Bourbonnais and Burgundy respectively, so that I could follow either one or the other according to circumstances if I were compelled to retreat. At the Morand bridge no barricade had been made. It was guarded by an iron gate; nobody knew where the keys were. I gave a man ten louis (£8) to go and buy some chains and a padlock. My money went the same way as that of Monsieur.

As I quitted this bridge on my way back to the other, I noticed a movement caused by the return of a reconnoitring party. It could not have gone very far, and had no doubt seen or met what we must call the enemy. What had happened? My anxiety was great, but it was ended by the arrival of a staff-officer, who galloped up to me and said:

'A reconnoitring party has just returned.'

'What has it seen?'

'Napoleon's advance-guard.'

'Far away?'

'Just coming into the suburb of the Guillotière.'

'What happened?'

'The two parties drank together.'

'Hasten to the Place Bellecour, bring up the two battalions in reserve there; place one on each side of the bridge.'

The quays were crowded; boats were coming and going, transporting to the left bank the inquisitive people who could not cross the bridge occupied by our troops. The latter were ready to advance; to do their duty, or to betray us? As I reached the bridge-gates, cries of 'Long live the Emperor!' burst from the other side of the river. On the quays the crowd took up the shout, and echoed it in a deafening manner.

I instantly put into execution the design I had formed of making some show of resistance. I intended to gain the head of the bridge with my staff, stop the first who appeared, seize their weapons, and fire. The bridge was blocked by troops in columns.

'Come along, gentlemen!' I cried; 'we must get down.'

We jumped off our horses and hurried along on foot as rapidly as we could, but scarcely had

we reached a quarter of the distance when the 4th Hussars, Napoleon's scouts, appeared at the other end of the bridge. At this sight officers and soldiers mingled their cheers with the shouts of the populace; shakos were waved on bayonets in token of delight; the feeble barricades were thrown down; everyone pressed forward to welcome the new arrivals to the town.

From that moment all was lost. We made our way back, and remounted our horses; there was no time to lose, for I rightly imagined that the 4th Hussars would meet no resistance at the Morand bridge, and they might reach the suburb of Vaise before us by following the quays, which is what eventually happened.

General Brayer, who was still with me, on hearing me give orders for the immediate evacuation of Lyons, took off his mask and said:

'It is useless, Monsieur le Maréchal; all measures have been taken to prevent your departure.'

'Surely, sir, you know me too well,' I answered, 'to suppose that I can be easily stopped. I shall know how to make myself respected, and to make a way for myself with my sword.'

He moved towards his men without replying. But another obstacle presented itself. The crowd had become so compact that it would have been vain for me to attempt to pass through it, had it not been for the arrival of two battalions of

reserves which I had summoned with the intention of posting them on the right and left sides of the bridge. The mass had to give way to admit of the passage of the troops. I took advantage of it to march with the column, making gestures to them as if to indicate where they should go. There was such a noise that it would have been impossible to make one's self heard. Having at length reached the rear of the column, I went along the quay. Colonel Dard, of the dragoons, whose regiment was not far away, came and asked me for orders; without stopping, I said:

'Get your horse and follow me.'

'Whither?'

'To the Bourbonnais high-road.'

I think his regiment refused to obey him, but am not certain, and have never been able to discover positively.

As we crossed the Place Bellecour, Comte Roger de Damas, governor of the 19th division, which was drawn up in the square, wished to stop. He was very confident, and had taken no precautions. I pointed out that it was now too late, and that the slightest delay would cause his arrest. He ran great risks, and had everything to fear, as a former *émigré;* but he would not be convinced, and went to his lodgings, while we started at full gallop. He had the good fortune to make his escape in disguise.

A little further on I met Monsieur's escort returning. As we passed I gave orders to the officer in command to follow me with his detachment, adding that the regiment was behind us, and we pursued our road with the same speed, when, in the middle of the suburb, we met a brigadier and four hussars from Napoleon's troops, who had come by the Morand bridge and the Quai de Saône, and who barred the way; they were all drunk.

The brigadier advanced to seize my bridle, crying:

'General, surrender yourself!'

He had scarcely uttered the words when, with a blow of my fist on his ear, I knocked him into the gutter, whence he had sprung. A hussar threw himself upon General Viscount Digeon, who said:

'What! You scoundrel, would you dare to arrest your General?'

'Oh, is it you General Digeon? You must join us.'

The General imitated my method of disposing of his man, as did also Viscount de Polignac and the others who were behind us.

I was wrapped in my cloak, and was only distinguishable by the white plume in my hat. The appearance of the hussars had been so sudden and unexpected that we had had no time to draw our swords. On looking round to see if we were

being followed, I saw that the detachment of dragoons had passed the hussars without taking them prisoners, whence I concluded that they were in league with them, and that they would arrest us if they could catch us; we therefore pressed on faster.

On the way General Digeon kept repeating to me that he knew a short cut to the Bourbonnais high-road, but while we were seeking about for it we reached the extreme end of the suburb. At the moment of the catastrophe, I had sent my courier on ahead with orders to send my carriage forward. It had been standing there for several hours, with my aides-de-camp and my secretary. The postilions had got off their horses, and were probably in some public-house—they could not be found. I threw a sad glance at my carriage, which contained a considerable sum in gold. One of my aides-de-camp handed me a pocket-book through the window, but we passed so swiftly that none of us could seize it.

Poor General Digeon, somewhat upset at having missed his short cut, did his utmost to induce me to take the Burgundy road instead of the Bourbonnais, which I knew very well. He had mistaken the two. As we galloped on he said:

'We are on the Burgundy road; there is a very bad feeling abroad there. You will be taken.'

I could neither calm him nor convince him that

we were on the right road. A short distance ahead I perceived two gendarmes' horses tethered to a post without their riders. We might, by signal or otherwise, have them unfastened and brought after us, for ours were so tired that they could scarcely move. I gave orders that the gendarmes' horses should be untied. We were still pursued by what we believed to be enemies; they had even gained upon us somewhat, but at last they slackened their speed, and we were compelled to do the same, as our exhausted horses had of their own accord dropped into a walk.

About a mile from the Tour de Salvagny, the first stage on quitting Lyons, I saw a general officer coming towards us. It was Simmer, who had been through the campaign of 1813 with me, and had served with great distinction. I had met him the previous day coming from Clermont with two battalions. He had received my orders to halt, and was on his way to Lyons for fresh instructions. Surprised at finding me on the road when he thought me still in the town, he asked what had happened. My only answer was:

'Have you any fresh horses to lend me?'

'Yes.'

'Then go and have them saddled and bridled.'

He started at a gallop. I did not lose sight of the detachment that was pursuing us; we had drawn away from it somewhat. At last we reached

the post-house. The two battalions were under arms, and received me with proper honours. Some of my party thought they noticed some national cockades among them; I did not myself. The horses were soon ready and we changed immediately, and taking General Simmer aside, I told him in a few words what had happened, and said:

'Order your troop to retreat.'

'They would not obey.'

'Then leave them, and follow me.'

With these words I started again, and the General remained behind.

Poor Digeon, preoccupied with the fear of being taken, suddenly perceived the white plume in my hat, and implored me to remove it. I hesitated, but at length, in order to pacify him, I pulled it out and tore it to pieces as we were galloping along, and notwithstanding the inconvenience of the wind and the rain. Just then his horse stumbled and fell; fortunately he was only scratched, and soon was in the saddle again, though we had to go rather more slowly. I noticed that our companions were a long way behind. They had probably found no horses at the post-house, and I was much afraid they would be taken; but I could not have saved them, and should only have been arrested as well. I presumed they would have presence of mind to strike into the cross-roads and across country. In this

state of doubt we galloped on, when we saw in front of us some horses being led. General Digeon, who expected to meet his along this road, concluded that they had passed the night at Tarare, and that those would be his horses. As his sight was very bad, he did not recognise them until we came close up to them. This was a piece of luck. We instantly jumped down and saddled and bridled them ourselves. Those we had left were very hot; they either smelt or saw the water of a little stream which ran near there, and we let them go. As we were remounting we perceived some horsemen far behind us, without being able to discover whether they were our companions or our pursuers. Away we went again.

As we passed through Tarare, a man leaning against a door, with a cotton cap on his head, greeted us with a feeble shout of 'Long live the Emperor!' On reaching the foot of the mountain, where carriages stop to have extra animals harnessed to them, I felt too faint to go any farther without having some food. I had not dined the previous evening, and had eaten nothing all day. It was then between four and five in the afternoon. We were told that Monsieur was about half-way up the hill, which is very long. We were very anxious to catch him up to tell him what had happened, and I, especially, to get a lift in his carriage, for I could scarcely

sit my horse any longer; my skin was already broken.

Poor General Digeon, who had not yet got over our meeting with the hussars in the suburbs of Lyons, wished to push on; but I needed time to breathe; my horse's action was so uncomfortable that it had produced a violent pain in my side; his trot would have been much worse. There were only two of us, and without quitting my saddle, I asked him to keep watch while I was brought some bread-and-cheese and a glass of wine. I ate very little of this frugal repast, only just enough to satisfy my immediate needs. The General ate in his turn while I kept a look-out. I do not think our halt lasted more than eight or ten minutes. We started off again at a gallop, notwithstanding the hill, and indifferent to the fate of our horses; what was important to us was to catch up the carriages, which we should otherwise have missed.

We came up with them just as they were at the top of the hill. On seeing us, Monsieur guessed what had happened, and offered us places in his carriage. I accepted; but as I was dismounting, Digeon said to me in a low voice:

'Don't get in; we shall be taken; they will go very slowly and will want to stop.'

'All the more reason,' I returned; 'we will hurry on, or share the same fate.'

Possessed with his idea, he continued on horse-

back, but did not, however, get beyond the next stage, where he was very glad to find a place in the carriage containing Monsieur's staff. His Royal Highness gave me a seat beside himself, that, I believe, of the Duke of Fitz-James—Count des Cars, Captain of the Guards, and the Duc de Polignac, Equerry, completed the party.

CHAPTER XVIII.

With Monsieur—Incidents of the Flight—General Du Coëtlosquet—The King's Generosity—Meeting of the Senate—Advice to the King—Hasty Measures—Ney's Desertion.

It would take too long to report our conversation during the journey. It first turned upon the event of the day and its causes; the discontent which was universal, but especially rife in the army; the choice of ministers, their incapacity for governing, their untimely opinions, their uselessness, and that of their agents. I must do Monsieur and his officers the justice to say that they seemed thoroughly alive to the mistakes that had been made. Were they in good faith? I think so; fear had worked wonders. Monsieur said that he would enlighten the King, and ask him to improve matters.

'It is too late,' I said; 'the impetus is given. But I cannot hide from myself all the misfortunes that are about to assail France at once—the smallest, which, at another time, and under different circumstances, would be the greatest, will be civil war in the departments of the west. You

yourself, Monseigneur, what have you learned of public opinion in the journeys undertaken by you or your sons? Nothing, except the opinions held by your partisans, who are blinded by their momentary grasp of power. You despised the men who could have advised and assisted you to good purpose. They understand matters, and to them the Restoration ought to have gone for its strength, or, at any rate, for a better direction. You should have attracted the army, received it well, identified yourself with it, noticed your officers; they would have fraternized together. Confidence once established, intimacy would soon have followed. They would have become the links in a great chain, and more openness and loyalty, if not attachment, could not fail to have resulted.'

All these remarks were considered true and sensible. My hearers answered:

'True, quite true.'

Monsieur added:

'Well, I myself have often thought of taking general officers as aides-de-camp; forty or fifty offered me their services, but the fear of hurting the feelings of the majority of them induced me to postpone my decision.'

'It would have been better,' I replied, 'to run the risk of offending a few people. You would have been compensated by the advantages accruing from the establishment of friendly relations, which

would have been valuable to you on your rounds of inspection, by bringing into stronger relief the good qualities of the Royal Family.'

This conversation bore fruit, for, on his arrival in Paris, Monsieur took as his aides-de-camp Viscount Digeon and Count Bordesoulle.

We stopped to dine at Roanne, at the house of a certain Flandre, the post-master. I only cite this fact, as he afterwards fell a victim to a lying denunciation, which the authorities never took the trouble to verify. At that time—I am now speaking of the Second Restoration—sentences of dismissal were very common. Flandre was accused of having refused to supply Monsieur with horses whereas, on rising from dinner, we found the carriages harnessed, and were able to start at once. I know not what were the political opinions of Flandre, but he was so overjoyed at having received Monsieur under his roof that, while the Prince was entering the carriage, he offered us a glass of some most delicious home-made liqueur, which Monsieur regretted having missed.

He was deprived of his appointment by the Prefect of the department, either from motives of personal vengeance of his own or of someone else, or upon false reports that might easily have been verified, as the majority of the inhabitants witnessed the arrival and departure. What made me so angry was that all my efforts, all my attempts to bring about the revocation of

this unjust sentence, were useless. At the moment of writing, my indignation is as great as it ever was.

Can anyone be surprised that people at length became embittered by so much injustice? I do not know whether application was made for the intervention of Monsieur or his officers; this, however, I do know, that 500 other post-masters simultaneously suffered the same fate.

We continued our journey without hearing any more of our pursuers. Monsieur reviewed a regiment of dragoons that was on its way to Lyons, and made it turn back. We only made a short halt at Moulins, to give us time to eat a very scanty breakfast, the Prefect having been taken by surprise, and we being in a hurry. We reached Nevers that evening, and there the Prince dined, and remained several hours consulting with the authorities as to the best means of defending the Loire. A very boastful General, Du Coëtlosquet, was in command of this subdivision of my government. He told his Royal Highness, and repeated it to me, that he was thoroughly in touch with the country; that, if he were provided with funds, he could immediately raise 4,000 men, and put the bridge in a proper condition of defence; in short, that he would answer for the future.

Monsieur asked my opinion. I shook my head; but noticing that his Royal Highness seemed to fancy this project, or rather this assistance, as a

drowning man will clutch at anything, I replied that if in reality the General had as much influence as he said, we would not hesitate, although I considered the expense useless, seeing that in all probability Napoleon would take the direction of Burgundy, where he was more sure of finding public opinion in his favour—and that is what happened. Even supposing he had followed our road, he would not have met the obstacles that Du Coëtlosquet said he could put in his way, for a few days later we learned that either the very evening of, or the evening after, our departure a small boat containing a light, and apparently prepared for fishing purposes, had come near the bridge ; that the news had spread that the General was going to set fire to it—the bridge was at that time on piles—and that thereupon a great riot had taken place. Du Coëtlosquet only escaped popular fury by hastening across country to Bourges without stopping. So this man, who had the effrontery to boast that he could dispose of the population, could not find a shelter in the length and breadth of his command.

After settling everything at Nevers, we reached Briare. It was Sunday. The Prince wishing to hear Mass, I sent a request to the priest to celebrate a Low one. We went to church, but as it was the hour of High Mass, it was hopeless to persuade the priest, and not only had we to assist at High Mass, preceded by the sprinkling with

holy water, but also at the sermon, with all the notices, etc. The priest was old, and very slow. Monsieur, pious and devout as he was, was much annoyed at it all; he displayed great impatience, and was red with anger, but, nevertheless, he very kindly received the priest afterwards while he was at breakfast. At length we started, and reached Paris next morning at five o'clock. The King was not awakened.

Monsieur de Blacas, Minister of the King's Household, was waiting in Monsieur's apartments for his arrival. He said that the excitement was great; that the evacuation of Lyons was differently interpreted, as no details had as yet come to hand, and that there was much anxiety among the soldiers. He asked me what I thought about it. I replied that in all probability the story would increase like a snowball, and that, just as at Lyons, the troops would not attack one another, but that, all the same, measures should be taken as a favourable opportunity might occur.

Monsieur begged me to go and rest. I went home, in truth sadly in want of it. I was in considerable pain from the chafing occasioned by bad saddles and indifferent horses. I had not taken off my clothes since March 8, and it was now the 13th. I went to bed, but was unable to sleep, for, notwithstanding the care I had taken to forbid my door, it was forced open, and many people came, rather from curiosity than interest.

Next day, to my great astonishment, my carriage, which I thought had been taken at Lyons and lost, was restored to me; it was a very pleasant surprise. Everything was intact, and my aides-de-camp told me they had met with no difficulties whatever. I had taken a considerable sum in gold with me, as I thought that I was going to keep house for some time at Bourges, and later at Nîmes, for which place I was bound when events stopped me at Lyons, and compelled me to retreat.

In the course of the day I went to pay a visit to Monsieur. His Royal Highness asked whether I had seen the King. I answered that I had not.

'Go to him; he will be delighted to see you; he is very pleased with your conduct. Here,' he added, 'is a paper which his Majesty desired me to give you.'

'What does it contain?' I asked in astonishment.

'The King,' he said, 'has learned that you have lost your carriage, with all your effects and money. He does not wish that you should suffer for your devotion and good services.'

I replied that I was profoundly touched by his Majesty's kindness, but that, as I had lost nothing, my pride would not allow me to accept it.

'Take it, all the same,' said Monsieur; 'the King will be very vexed if you refuse.'

I stood out, and told his Royal Highness that my carriage had been restored to me without the slightest loss.

I then went to the King. His Majesty rose and gave me his hand, praised and thanked me for my zeal. I, in my turn, thanked him, and spoke to him of the conversation I had just had with Monsieur. The King pressed me to accept his offer, but ceased insisting when I told him that my devotion needed no encouragement, and that I did not consider I deserved a reward for having done my duty.

The King then told me he was organizing a corps of which he intended to give the command to the Duc de Berry ; that I was to be his first Lieutenant, and that a council of war was to be established.

'That is quite right,' I said ; 'but as we have good reason to fear that our troops may desert, whither will your Majesty retire in case of being compelled to momentarily abandon your capital ?'

The King exhibited great surprise, as though this idea had never crossed his mind.

'But,' said he, 'surely we have not come to that ?'

'No,' I replied ; 'but we may come to it in five or six days. Your Majesty must know what Napoleon's activity is. It will not take him longer than that to reach Paris. Unless he be stopped on the road, he will push forward rapidly, and

there is no reason to believe, after what occurred at Lyons, that any regiment will show resistance.'

'I have great confidence in Marshal Ney,' said the King; 'he has promised to seize and bring him to me in an iron cage.'

'I believe,' I answered, 'that he will do his utmost to carry out his promise—he is a man of his word; but his troops may desert. Bad example is catching, and, unfortunately, the contagion is spreading.'

'I will think it over,' said the King, as he dismissed me. 'My Ministers are coming; I will speak to them upon the subject.'

They were absolutely incapable of giving any sensible advice, as they were panic-stricken.

At this council a royal sitting of the Senate was decided upon for the next day. I was summoned to take part in the procession, and the King, as he passed me, pointed to the medal of the Legion of Honour that he had been advised to wear. Nobody was likely to remark or be pleased by it. This Order, which was the reward of all services, and during the last years of the Empire almost exclusively of military services, held a high place in public opinion; it was consecrated by an article in the Charter; but after the Restoration the intention seemed to have been to debase it by the prodigality with which it was distributed.

The King was received with acclamation; he made a very touching speech. Monsieur and his

sons threw themselves into his arms, swearing fidelity to the Charter. This scene electrified the Senate and the public. The King had declared that he would die upon his throne, and four days later he abandoned it. It must be said in fairness that he could not count upon any resistance being made to Napoleon.

The first council of war was much too numerously attended; there was too much discussion and too little action. I agreed with nobody; they all seemed to me too timid, as usually happens at meetings of this kind. Everything was afterwards concealed from me, although I was second in command; and the poor Duc de Berry, who was inexperienced, was bullied in order to induce him to do what was for the interest of individuals without regard for that of the public.

I desired to give him some private information. I went to him on March 18; I criticised several measures, and spoke also about the steps that had been taken to keep me aloof, as people feared my vigilant eye, my honesty, and uprightness. The Prince, already entangled, received my remarks and plain observations very badly. An excited discussion followed, which ended in my resignation, which I sent to the King with an explanation of my reasons for the step. The King was grieved, and would not accept it; but I was absolutely determined to take no further part whatever beyond loyally carrying out what I had sworn.

I begged his Majesty to tell me to which department he intended to withdraw in case of necessity. This time he was less reticent, and replied :

'To La Vendée.'

'All will be lost,' I said, 'if your Majesty goes thither. No doubt you have more partisans there than elsewhere, but the majority will take no active part, being tired and worn out with civil war. You will be pursued, the coast will be seized, and your retreat will become impossible. Go rather to Flanders. Feeling in the northern departments and in the Pas-de-Calais is better than anywhere else. Lille or Dunkirk offer you absolute security. You have exits by land and sea, close to the frontier, whence you can easily gain a foreign country in case you are threatened with a siege. Raise some battalions of royal volunteers ; garrison the towns with them, if you can count upon none of the regular troops. One or other of these places will serve as a rallying-point for your adherents, and you can establish your government there for the time being.'

The King reflected, and said :

'The plan is not bad ; we will wait for further news.'

The courtiers, who were not long in learning what had passed between the Duc de Berry and me, were sorry, especially for my resignation. I had become to them a sort of guarantee for my

principles, since I had recently given proofs of them at Lyons.

In the evening of the same day the Duc de Berry sent for me; I was somewhat surprised at the message. On entering his room he offered me his hand, embraced me, and said:

'Let us forget all that passed this morning. The King has ordered me to put into your hands the management of military matters. We will work together. Henceforward you are in charge of everything.'

'It cannot be done so quickly as that,' I answered. 'Put on the orders that to-morrow, at ten o'clock, I will take over the command, and that all correspondence is to be addressed to me.'

At seven o'clock next morning the Prince summoned me to come at once. I found him much agitated. His first words were:

'We are betrayed by Marshal Ney.'

'Impossible!' I exclaimed; 'the Marshal is a man of honour. His troops have perhaps abandoned him, and taken him with them by force.

'No, it is he who took them over to Bonaparte.'

'What proof have you?'

'Generals Lecourbe, Bourmont, and Clouet, the Marshal's aide-de-camp, who have quitted him, have just arrived, and are gone to convey the news to the King. And my regiment too! Galbois has taken it over as well, and only

yesterday he was swearing and protesting on his soul and body that he was trustworthy! I had treated them so well! They have deceived me abominably! But what are we to do now?'

'Come to a speedy resolution,' I answered; 'we must first send all the troops out of Paris to Essonne or Corbeil, on the two roads to Fontainebleau. All resistance is now out of the question. We must save the King and the Royal Family, and not expose them to be kept by force in Paris as hostages for Napoleon, for I feel confident that they would suffer no harm.'

While orders were being sent out, I was informed of the treasonable remarks that were being made in barracks. Just then Monsieur entered, and said that the King wanted me. I followed the Prince to his presence.

His Majesty was calm; he gave me his hand, and said:

'Well, you know what has happened. What is to be done now?'

'Sire, you must go to Lille. I advise that the troops should be ordered to quit Paris with the view of favouring your departure. Assemble your military household on the Champ de Mars, and announce your intention of reviewing your troops at Essonne. Once in the military school, you will be in safety.'

Several Ministers were present. The Minister of War had ordered the garrisons of the North

to advance, and had assembled them at Péronne under the command of the Duke of Orleans; the Duke of Bourbon was sent into the West. The other Ministers had taken no steps and made no preparations, such, for instance, as the emptying of the Treasury, for funds were very necessary, whether to raise a large number of royal volunteers, to attract the partisans of the King's cause, or to establish the Government at Lille. It was discovered later that a great deal, on the other hand, had been distributed to the Generals, officers, and soldiers, the latter of whom were employing it in toasting Napoleon in the public-houses with loud shouts of 'Long live the Emperor!' There was good ground for fearing a mutiny. I sent word to the Generals and officers that I should hold them responsible if the marching orders were not executed. I also recommended that, after the review, the King should return to the Tuileries, if the population of Paris remained calm, as his presence would restore confidence, and give time to make other plans; the proposal was approved.

The Generals who had quitted Ney had reported to the King that he had said in announcing his determination, 'All the Marshals are of my opinion.'*

* In 1815 the attitude of the Marshals of the First Napoleon was as follows: Macdonald, Oudinot, St. Cyr, Victor, Marmont, and Pérignon were on the side of the Bourbons—Augereau

They exhibited doubt and surprise, and one of them answered:

'Surely you do not include the Duke of Tarentum, for he has just shown at Lyons that his loyalty can be depended upon.'

'Oh, as for him,' answered Ney, 'we do not count him; and, what is more, we do not want him!'

As the King had told this story in presence of the Princes, some of the Ministers and myself, I fancied that his intention was to flatter me, and answered that I was delighted that the Marshal was so well informed as to the sentiments governing my conduct; that certainly he had had a proof of them the preceding year, during the negotiations relative to the abdication, and that while he had deserted his side I had remained faithful to it till the last moment. I had many preparations to make and orders to give, so I asked the King's permission to retire.

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and Berthier were in retreat; and rather more than half the Marshals were on the side of Napoleon, viz., Davoût, Ney, Soult, Murat, Suchet, Grouchy; and less actively Mortier, Masséna, Moncey, Jourdan, Lefèbvre, Brune, and Sérurier. Bernadotte was on the throne of Sweden, and Lannes, Bessières, and Poniatowski were dead.

CHAPTER XIX.

The State of Paris—Imminent Peril—Plan of Escape—Hint to Viomênil—At Saint Denis—A Disorderly March—At Abbeville—The Sub-Prefect of Béthune.

DURING the day the King recalled me just as I was on my way to the *Château*, to inform him of the departure of the troops who had obeyed, but murmuring and with very discouraging remarks. On reaching the Tuileries I perceived his carriages harnessed, an enormous crowd collected, greedy for news, officers hurrying hither and thither, pack-horses laden with portmanteaux. Everything looked prepared for departure, though the carriages were harnessed as though for an ordinary drive.

The King had desired me to come in civil dress, so as not to be observed or remarked. He told me he intended to go to the Champ de Mars, and that, according to the report I sent him of what passed, he would decide what to do.

After his departure I mingled with the crowd, and approached different groups. I heard no disloyal language, but various expressions of

opinion upon the state of affairs, upon the effect likely to be produced on the troops by the King's presence, upon the absurdity of fifty old men armed with guns and halberds, most of them in the uniform of general officers and wearing various orders outside their coats, who were marching two and two towards the Tuileries to offer their services. I must admit that they did not look martial, and gave reasonable ground for amusement to the crowd that always finds something to laugh at even in the gravest circumstances.

The King had been gone scarcely half an hour when I saw him come back. Surprised at so speedy a return, I went to the *Château*. The crowd was increasing every moment, and made the King anxious; I told him that from what I had been able to see and hear it meant nothing but very natural curiosity; that it was, moreover, a Sunday, and that the day was sufficiently fine to attract a large number of people to the Tuileries gardens. The carriages for the King and his suite were still standing in the courtyard. I begged him to send them away, because then the larger number of the inquisitive crowd would depart, and when the palace returned to its ordinary quietude the remainder would disperse at dinner-time, and my words proved correct.

The King had returned owing to a misunderstanding. He had met his military household marching towards St. Denis, a warning that

they were, in case of necessity, to advance in that direction having been transformed into an order for immediate execution. The King had commanded it to retire, and, after marching past him, it had returned to the military school.

It was known that Napoleon would reach Fontainebleau that very day; he might travel post, cause himself to be recognised by the troops along the road, and bring them up with him; but not having positive information as to their feelings towards him, and not knowing how he would be received in Paris, although he had plenty of supporters there, he might naturally conclude that, as the King was still there, some measures of defence would have been taken. These reasons, when I put them forward, were appreciated, and had the effect of tranquillizing the Royal Family for the moment. I then proposed to clothe a Swiss regiment in French uniform, to place it in advance of the troops at Essonne with orders to march upon Fontainebleau, as though to join itself to Bonaparte. The disguise would have deceived every eye, and had it succeeded in seizing his person or even in crossing swords, how many calamities would have been thereby spared to France! The Duc de Berry rejected the idea; the King said that if this regiment failed it would be very seriously exposed; I replied, crossly, that that would be better than compromising the monarchy.

Not only was the plan given up, but the King added :

'I see that all is over now. Do not, therefore, let us engage in useless resistance. I am determined to start. Try to bring our supporters into Flanders, and to make the regiments that went out this morning follow us. No fighting, Monsieur le Maréchal! Recall to St. Denis all the troops that wish to return.

'Allow me to point out to you, sire,' I said in reply, 'that this determination is premature. The troops have barely reached the places to which they were ordered; we must let them rest. I will go to the headquarters at Villejuif, whither you can send a courier to me with orders to hold myself in readiness to march. No one will know whether it is to be an advance or a retreat. An hour later, another express may bring me an order to follow you. I alone shall know the direction you have taken. Meanwhile, your Majesty will have prepared everything for your departure, and will enter your carriage between eleven o'clock and midnight.'

'But,' said the Duc de Berry, 'what if the sentinels of the National Guard, who are on duty at the palace, prevent our departure, as they did at the beginning of the Revolution to the unfortunate Louis XVI., when he wished to go to St. Cloud? What are we to do then? Are we to scatter them with the bodyguard?'

'No, nephew,' said the King hastily; 'we must not alienate the inhabitants of Paris.'

'I do not think,' said I, 'that the sentinels will oppose any resistance or put any obstacles in the way of the King wishing to review the troops at Essonne. But I have a plan whereby every pretext for insubordination can be avoided. The King can place absolute reliance upon his Household and servants. Very good. Let the gates and doors be shut at ten or eleven o'clock. The carriages can draw up at some distance off, or, if necessary, outside Paris. The King, on leaving his apartments, will gain the Pavillon Marsan through the palace; thence he will be carried in a sedan-chair to a hackney-coach, which will take him to his own carriage.'

The Duc de Berry roughly interrupted me by saying:

'Pray, sir, where do you suppose we can find a chair large enough to contain, or two men strong enough to carry, his Majesty?'

This unexpected outburst made even the King laugh. He said that he would think it over, and commanded me to come that evening to receive the password which would be given as usual.

On leaving his room, the Duc de Berry asked me if I should start for Villejuif after the password was given. Upon my answering affirmatively, he said he should go thither also, and we separated.

As the inquisitive crowd noticed no further preparations at the Château, it dispersed, as I had foreseen, about six o'clock. When I returned to the palace at half-past eight, I found the usual calm reigning in the courtyards, but the interior presented a very different spectacle. It was with great difficulty that I could pass through the drawing-rooms to reach the King's study; they were full of courtiers, some devoted, some curious, but all entitled to the entrée. The King came in, talked for a few minutes, gave the password, and withdrew, beckoning me to follow him. The Princes were assembled in his study. On entering it the King said:

'My departure is fixed for eleven o'clock; I will carry it out according to your advice.'

'In that case, sire,' I answered, 'I will take leave of your Majesty. As soon as I reach Villejuif I will give orders to the troops to hold themselves in readiness to march, but I will not move them until I receive instructions from your Majesty.'

'I am going there too,' said the Duc de Berry.

'Monseigneur,' I answered, 'I have been thinking that it is unnecessary for you to disturb yourself, as the troops are to come back. Your Royal Highness may follow the King to St. Denis, where I expect the troops to arrive between seven and eight to-morrow morning—if they will obey orders, that is. In any case, I shall be there at that hour with the staff.'

The King said that I was right. The Prince replied that there was no reason why he should wait at St. Denis, as the troops were to continue their march, and that he would accompany Monsieur to place himself at the head of the King's Household, who were to start from the Champ de Mars. As I was about to withdraw, the King warmly pressed my hand, and said:

'Au revoir, my dear Marshal; I shall never forget your zeal and devotion.'

The drawing-rooms were not yet empty. A General who had formerly emigrated, and who was worthy of respect by reason of his great age and services—Monsieur de Vioménil—asked me for advice. He afterwards became a Marshal of France, but at that time my acquaintance with him was very slight. His honesty pleased me. He had been given the command of a sort of battalion collected at Vincennes, composed of 700 or 800 half-pay officers of all ranks. The plan was to enrol them among the Royal volunteers who were being raised, or at least so it was believed, in Normandy.

'These officers,' said he to me, 'are very excited, and I can do nothing with them. I have written three letters, and paid the same number of visits to the Minister for War, and can neither see him nor get any answer. What had I better do? Give me some orders.'

'You are a good man,' I answered. 'Don't

give another thought to your battalion of officers; pack up your things and leave Paris to-night.'

'What!' he exclaimed in surprise; 'is the King going?'

'I cannot tell you more than that. You ask me for orders; I give you advice. Say nothing about it, I count upon your discretion;' and so saying, I left him for Villejuif.

I did not find the staff there, but only Generals Ruty, of the artillery, and Haxo, of the engineers. General Maison, Governor of Paris, and Commandant of one of the divisions, wrote to me that, as he had learned from the Duc de Berry that the troops were to return, he would join his division at St. Denis.

I issued the warnings and orders agreed upon, and as soon as I was certain they would be executed, and being warned that the head of a column was approaching Villejuif, I quitted it with the two Generals just named. The staff was not to be found at St. Denis any more than at Villejuif, but all the members of it, without exception, had received the largesse paid at the commencement of a campaign, and promises of handsome presents according to their future services. I waited in vain till one o'clock for the arrival of the troops. An aide-de-camp from General Rapp, who commanded a division, came up, just as I was starting, to ask for orders. I gave him some for his General and for the other

divisions, and they were simply to continue their march next day.

This battalion of officers, which the day before had been at Vincennes, now appeared, I know not how, at St. Denis. General St. Sulpice, who commanded it, told me that they were much excited and in a state of ferment, and as this condition of mind might have considerable results, I ordered him to lead them towards Rouen, so as to avoid any contact with the troops that were supposed to be arriving. He warned me that they would refuse to obey. I told him to try. He did so, but in vain.

Just as a detachment of artillery from La Fère entered the town, I was informed that it was approaching. I sent General Ruty to order it to retreat, but the half-pay officers, beside themselves, joined with the artillery, and Ruty, in trying to compel obedience to my orders, nearly fell a victim to them. I learned at the same time that General Maison was being pursued, I do not know why, and had been obliged to flee.

Shortly afterwards another scene presented itself to my eyes. The carriages belonging to the Duc de Berry passed through St. Denis on their way from Villejuif. The mutineers seized them, compelled the postilions by threats of violence to dismount, mounted the horses in their place, and I felt ashamed to see French officers in uniform, epaulettes on their shoulders, forage-caps on their

heads, behave as they did. They were mostly drunk and excited; and if there is any excuse for their conduct, it is to be found in that fact. I still blush for them!

Tired of waiting vainly at St. Denis, I started at one o'clock for Beaumont, where I established my headquarters for the time being. A large number of half-pay officers were assembled in front of the inn where I was staying, the first on the left beyond the square. I anticipated some opposition from them, but was absolutely determined not to allow myself to be insulted with impunity, even though I should get into difficulties; but they remained quiet, and were polite, even respectful. At Beaumont I found the rear-rank of the King's Household, dismounted body-guards, some leading their horses by the bridle, others lying down in carts, others on foot, their knapsacks under their arms. It all looked like a rout after a defeat; and, as I did not stop at Beaumont, I found the road similarly garnished as far as Noailles.

I left at Beaumont the same orders as at St. Denis, and hired post-horses to rejoin the Princes at the head of the King's Household. About half-way I had the pleasure of meeting your sister, De Massa,* and her children. Her husband was Prefect of Beauvais. Fearing what

* Duchesse de Massa, one of the Marshal's daughters by his first wife, Mademoiselle Jacob.—*Translator's note.*

might happen, he was sending all he held dearest to Paris; but as the party might run some risk, either on the road or at St. Denis, or even in the capital itself, I took them back with me, convinced that they would be safer at Beauvais.

The Princes intended to pass the night at Noailles; I arrived just as they were about to sit down to table. They invited me to join them. After giving them an account of what I had seen and heard, I said that they must not trust to the troops, and strongly urged them to continue their march, in spite of the disorder among the King's Household. On learning that my daughter was in the village, they had the kindness to send some dinner to her. When the repast was finished, I asked where the King was. Monsieur knew that he had started for Lille, but did not know whether, on leaving Beauvais, he had taken the road to Abbeville. I asked for orders, and he desired me to try and rejoin the King, to whom I might be of great service.

I took leave of their Royal Highnesses and, with your sister, started for Beauvais, which we reached between eleven o'clock and midnight. Your brother-in-law was much surprised at the return of his wife, but, after hearing my explanations, was delighted to see her. He told me that the King had taken the Abbeville road. I was sorry to hear it, as his enemies might believe and spread the report that he intended to withdraw

into England, and thus cause discouragement among his supporters. After remaining a few hours at Beauvais, and leaving fresh orders for the troops (as though they were likely to reach there), I was just about to depart, when an aide-de-camp from General Grundler, permanent Secretary at the War Office, entered and handed me a letter, informing me that the Minister* had not appeared since the previous day, stating that they did not know what to do, and begging for my orders. I told the messenger that by the time my orders reached General Grundler he would no longer require them. As a matter of fact, he had left the War Office by the time his aide-de-camp reached Paris.

Nobody along the road could tell me whether the King had halted, or whether he was still moving forward, and in this state of uncertainty I entered Abbeville. Nothing indicated the presence of his Majesty; no guards at the gate; no life in the streets. On my way to the inn I passed and recognised Comte de Jaucourt. I stopped and called him. He was one of the King's ministers, and, if I remember rightly, had charge of the Foreign Office in the absence of Monsieur de Talleyrand. He informed me that the King had been in the town since the previous day, and that he had received no news since he left the capital. He also begged me to go straight to him. I said

* The heroic Dupont of Baylen celebrity.

I must first go to the inn to change my clothes and have some breakfast. I had not undressed for several days. While I was dressing, Monsieur de Jaucourt went to announce me, and summonses came in rapid succession.

I found the King as calm as when tranquilly reigning in the Tuileries. He received me with the utmost kindness, and questioned me concerning all that had occurred. No means of communication, either by courier or estafettes, had been established; but they had omitted to destroy the telegraphic communication, a circumstance likely to be made use of in Paris. I then asked the King what he was doing in Abbeville.

'I am waiting here,' he answered, 'for my brother and my Household, who ought to arrive this morning.'

'Your Majesty,' I replied, 'does not know that your Household will only reach Beauvais to-day, (March 22). It will require two days more to arrive here, and will then probably be in the same disorderly condition as it was when I saw it yesterday.'

I implored the King to start, because he would not be in safety until he reached Lille, and to take the shortest road by Hesdin and Béthune. His Majesty displayed great objection to that road, preferring the longer one by Boulogne, Calais, and Dunkirk. I pointed out that this road, running as it did by the sea, would give

colour to the rumour that he was about to leave his kingdom and embark; that orders might be sent from Paris to forbid his admission into those towns, whereas the road to Béthune was still clear, and that to Péronne covered by the Duke of Orleans, who had collected there all the garrisons of the neighbouring towns, even that of Lille. I added that he had not a moment to lose. The King yielded at last, but insisted upon dining first, and the utmost that I could obtain was that dinner was ordered for an hour earlier. He desired me to precede him, with full powers to prepare the way for him, and to order horses. He had no courier, only two footmen on the box of the carriage in the liveries they wore at the Tuileries. I started.

The post-house of St. Pol was some distance away, outside the town. It took some time to procure horses, and meanwhile, towards one in the morning, I ordered some food. Scarcely had I seated myself at table when the King was announced. The news of his arrival having suddenly spread abroad, a large portion of the population collected and rushed into the room of a poor woman, whither he had been conducted to rest. The good creature had torn down some old bed-hangings to serve as a carpet for the feet of her guest. The homage of the inhabitants was so noisy and inconvenient that, to save the King from being stifled, the Prince de Neuchâtel and

Monsieur de Blacas, Minister of the Household, were obliged to stand guard over the door with their drawn swords. The latter looked exceedingly comic in that attitude.

The same devotion was displayed at Béthune. I waited there for the King in order to receive his final orders, as that was the last stage before Lille. His Majesty alighted in the public square while the horses were being changed. It was five o'clock in the morning. The whole population turned out, men and women in very slight costumes. The Sub-prefect himself stood by the carriage-door, one leg half bare, his feet in slippers, his coat under his arm, his waistcoat and shirt unbuttoned, and his hat on his head! He could not take it off, as his hands were fully occupied in trying to keep his sword in place and to fasten his necktie!

CHAPTER XX.

Outside Lille—Entry into Lille—The King's Uneasiness—An Inconvenient Loss—The King's Decision—Departure for the Frontier—The King's Farewell.

On reaching the barrier of Lille I saw that it was shut, and the drawbridge raised. It was nine o'clock. I inquired the reason of the gate-keeper, who could give me no information except that, as a large number of troops had arrived the previous day, only one gate, I forget which, had been left open. I had no one on horseback to send there. I grew nervous lest a rising should have occurred in favour of Napoleon. I already saw the King in difficulties, and reproached myself for having prevailed upon him to take that road. However, if the troops had taken possession of the town, there was no reason why they should have closed the gates, and they would have had cavalry posted outside to give them intelligence of all that passed.

As I could not succeed, either by cries or signs, in making myself understood by the sentinel on the rampart, I obtained a scrap of paper from the

gatekeeper and wrote to the Commandant, whoever he might be, a few words, stating my name and announcing the speedy arrival of the King. I wrapped this note round a stone, and, having passed the barrier, threw it over the ditch. It fortunately fell upon the rampart; the sentry picked it up and called the officer on duty. I waited for some time, and, being still uneasy, sent back to stop the King's carriages, so that they might retreat if we found ourselves on hostile ground.

At last the drawbridge was lowered and an officer advanced. It was Paul de Bourgoing, your uncle,* at that time aide-de-camp to the Marshal Duke of Treviso. He looked so surprised, so bewildered, so embarrassed, that I suspected some trickery, although he told me that all was quiet, that the Duke of Orleans and his [commanding officer] Marshal [Mortier] had returned the day before from Valenciennes, that they were much surprised at the sudden arrival of the King, and that he knew no more.

In order to obtain clearer information I sent

* Brother of the Marshal's third wife, Mademoiselle de Bourgoing, who was the mother of the son Alexander, afterwards Duke of Tarentum, for whom these 'Recollections' were written. The Marshal's second wife was Mademoiselle de Montholon, widow of General Joubert, who was killed at the Battle of Novi, July, 1799. By her, the Marshal had one daughter, who married the Marquis de Roche-Dragon.—*Translator's note.*

the chief of my staff, General Hulot, into the town, and questioned the officer during his absence. He expressed surprise at my incredulity, and repeated to me, upon his honour, all that he had just stated. This tranquillized me, and I was made still easier by the return of General Hulot, who told me that the Duke of Orleans and the Marshal were following him with an escort, and were going out to meet the King. I then sent my aide-de-camp to inform the carriages they might advance. They soon appeared; the procession going out to meet them reached the barrier at the same moment as they did.

The King at length entered Lille. I accompanied him on horseback. It was market-day. The King was received with acclamation by the inhabitants and country folk, but coldly by the troops, especially by a battalion of light infantry drawn up just inside the gate. We discovered during the morning, on reviewing the garrison, and from the reports of their leaders, that the same feeling prevailed throughout the troops.

The King caused it to be announced that he would visit each corps. This step was not expected, but I was one of the first to recommend it. The return of these troops was a serious annoyance. We had no reason to hope that they would quit the town if ordered to do so, and the Royal volunteers were already several days on the road to Paris, whither they had been sum-

moned by the Minister. I have already said that nothing had been attended to, foreseen or ordered. The Duke of Orleans, even, had been left without notice of the King's march, so that on suddenly learning his departure, but not the direction he had taken nor his future plans, the Duke had thought he was doing right in raising the camp at Péronne and dismissing the regiments to their respective garrisons.

During the evening the King held a private council, at which I was present, with the Duke of Orleans, Monsieur de Blacas, and the Marshals Berthier and Mortier.* His Majesty first caused a letter from Monsieur to be read to us. I have a clear recollection of its substance, as it was read four or five times, and discussed quite as often.

On reaching Beauvais, the day after I had left it, Monsieur had been informed that the larger portion of the King's Household could not march together, that they would infallibly be caught, that they were not in a state to defend themselves, and that the liberty of the Princes would be seriously endangered; that, consequently and owing to their ignorance of the King's whereabouts, it had been decided to disband the Household; and, further, that as the Princes dared no longer risk remaining in France, amid so many hostile garri-

* Prince of Neuchâtel, and Duke of Treviso respectively.—*Translator's note.*

sons, they would start immediately, take ship either at Tréport or Dieppe, and rejoin his Majesty as speedily as possible in England or on the Continent.

Such was the tenor of this letter. At the very moment when its text was being discussed by the Princes, the news arrived that Napoleon was to enter Paris that very day. This had the effect of hastening their decision, which they immediately communicated to the King. The messenger, however, who carried the letter had not succeeded in coming up with him before he reached Lille.

On leaving Abbeville, the King had announced to Monsieur his determination to make for Lille, and had sent him orders to bring the Household thither by the most direct road from Beauvais. The two despatches had crossed one another, and the King therefore did not know whether, after what his brother had told him of the state of the Household, he had been able to execute the orders sent to him or not.

This was the subject of our discussion. I maintained that it was impossible that Monsieur should not have deferred to the King's orders, and marched with all the Household that was available. My opinion was shared, and we discovered, after calculating dates, that Monsieur ought to reach Arras or Béthune either that very day or early the following morning. The King then displayed some reluctance to waiting at Lille

amid troops whose dispositions were so clearly unfavourable to him. The Duke of Orleans and the Marshal Duke of Treviso hastened to reassure him, and said that they would answer for their submission at any rate for some days. This pledge, however, did not satisfy him, and he announced his intention of starting that night for Dunkirk on the plea of visiting the frontier.

I pointed out that after giving out that he intended to establish the seat of his Government provisionally at Lille, where he had been so loyally received by the population, it would not be worthy of the King to leave it secretly, that it would be more honourable to keep the promise made of reviewing the garrison next morning, and that he could then announce his intention of going to see Dunkirk and returning thence to Lille. The King, however, possessed by a dread of being prevented from executing his plan next day, expressed his firm intention to start that same night. I resumed my arguments as to the dignity of a King of France, the inconvenience attending a plan which might seriously endanger the Princes and the Household, who were advancing in all security to Lille; the greater nobility of risking everything rather than hurt the feelings of a town which, on its awakening, would learn the news of a departure that might be very justly stigmatized as a flight. For a

moment I thought my arguments had prevailed, but the King's mind was made up, and I had to yield. It was arranged that he should start at midnight, that I should precede him with full powers to act as I thought best, and the sitting terminated.

The Prince of Condé had arrived during the day. We were all surprised, and with difficulty suppressed our laughter, out of respect for his age and the presence of the King, when we heard him ask whether, as the next day was Maundy Thursday, his Majesty would perform the ceremony of the washing of feet.* The moment was well chosen! Even the King could scarcely control his laughter.

The King had quitted Paris in such haste that there had only been time to pack one portmanteau for his use, and this had been stolen on the road. His Majesty felt the loss the more as this portmanteau contained all his clean linen—six shirts, a dressing-gown, and pair of slippers to which he was specially attached. On telling me of the theft, he said:

'They have taken my shirts; I had not too many of them.' And then he added in a melancholy voice, 'But I regret my slippers even more. You will realize some day, my dear Marshal, the

* A Roman Catholic ceremony performed on the Thursday in Passion Week, when a certain number of poor men have their feet washed in church.—*Translator's note.*

value of a pair of slippers that have taken the shape of your foot!'

Little did the King think that a few hours later he was going to lose his entire kingdom!

At eleven o'clock, just as I was about to start, the Comte de Blacas was announced. He said in a determined voice:

'Monsieur le Maréchal, I have thought over what you just now vainly pointed out to his Majesty, namely, that it was unworthy of a King of France to seem to flee by a clandestine departure at night, thereby displeasing his supporters and exposing himself to the sarcasms of his enemies. If you are still of the same mind, postpone your departure for a short time. I will go and renew your observations to his Majesty. He is in safety here, at least until to-morrow, for I have taken the precaution to have all the gates of the town shut, and nothing can enter without my authorization. I shall be warned if any couriers or travellers of importance arrive.'

Thereupon he left me, and came back half an hour later to tell me that the King consented to remain until ten o'clock next morning, that he had found him in his shirt-sleeves shaving, and that at the first word he had laid down the razor, flown into a violent passion, and exclaimed with an oath:

'Why do they keep changing their plans every

minute, and prevent me from starting or from going to bed?'

'It was,' added Monsieur de Blacas, 'the most ridiculous scene—his attitude, his shirt-cuffs turned back, his face one half red with anger, and the other white with soap. At last the King calmed down, finished shaving, and went to bed.'

I did the same, being worn out with fatigue.

I was fast asleep when, at seven o'clock, Monsieur de Blacas came to me again on behalf of the King.

'What has happened now?' I asked.

'Not one of my orders was carried out,' he replied. 'The gates of the town were left open; travellers, couriers, stage-coaches passed through freely. The mail has arrived. The *Moniteur* contains a full account of Napoleon's new Government. I have ordered every copy to be seized.'

Poor Blacas had forgotten that there were many other papers being widely circulated, each containing the same news.

I dressed hastily and went to the King's apartments. I found there the Duke of Orleans and the Marshals Berthier and Mortier. We were ushered into his Majesty's study.

'Dunkirk is out of the question now,' he said. 'I have just been informed that the troops are taking off the white cockade and substituting the so-called national cockade for it. After what has

happened in Paris, which will probably occur everywhere else, I am no longer in safety here.'

I tried to reassure the King, but this time he was absolutely decided. He ordered horses, meaning to start across the frontier at once.

'Sire,' I said, 'he who throws up the game acknowledges himself beaten. This state of things assuredly cannot last long; but, since your mind is made up, permit me to stay behind.'

The King displayed surprise; he frowned, and became pensive. I continued:

'I have loyally done all in my power to maintain the authority of your Majesty and to keep you in possession of your dominions. You wish to abandon them. I will conduct you in safety to the frontier, but I will go no further. I should only be in your way, a charge, an encumbrance to you. I will remain unalterably attached and devoted to your Majesty, and faithful to my oaths. Some events may occur in the interior of the kingdom during your absence, which can only last a few months, and I may be able to serve you better in France than elsewhere.'

The resolution of the Congress of Vienna, taken on March 13, had reached the King either the previous evening or during the night. It declared the intention of all Europe to arm against Napoleon. This intelligence had just been printed and advertised without producing

much effect. Its authenticity even was doubted in the town.

It was clear that France divided could make no stand against such a mass of forces; she had already succumbed once when she was not divided, and when a strong hand held the reins of State. My prediction that the King would be back in a few months was not baseless therefore. I terminated my speech by offering my Marshal's baton as a proof of my sincerity. The King had recovered his usual serenity. He praised my honesty, and, as a token of his confidence, acceded to my request. Marshal Mortier asked the same favour, which was also granted to him. Poor Prince de Neuchâtel was biting his nails with vexation. He was one of the captains of the Body-Guard, and on duty; he could not, therefore, ask for the same permission. On leaving the presence he followed me in great distress, and told me that he would resign as soon as they reached Ghent, that he would then go to Bamberg to fetch the Princess and his children, with whom he would return to France. He begged me to inform his family and friends of his determination, even by means of the newspapers. I promised to do so, and kept my word. He feared lest he should be taken for an *émigré*.

Before entering his carriage, the King desired to compensate Monsieur de Brigode, Mayor of the

town, at whose house he had stayed. He gave him the rank of Commander of the Legion of Honour, and on his return conferred a peerage upon him. As soon as all was ready he started, escorted by a detachment of the National Guard, some gendarmes and cuirassiers. The Duke of Orleans and Marshal Mortier accompanied him as far as the barrier, at which point I implored the King to order them to return to the town to restrain the garrison. I sent General Hulot to Menin,* to warn the Commandant of that foreign town of the King's arrival, in order that there should be no mistake, for without this precaution they might have opened fire upon the carriages and the escort. He also had orders to engage horses, to advise the Custom House officials, and to point out exactly where the frontier was, because I was personally determined not to cross it, lest the publication of the fact that I had done so with the King should cause alarm to your sisters and my family. A very touching spectacle was presented to us along the road, the entire population on their knees in the mud, their hands raised to heaven, imploring the King not to abandon them. Later on his Majesty liked to recall these scenes of devoted attachment, which moved him very much.

On reaching the frontier I stopped the carriages. General Hulot had brought a superior

* A town just across the Belgian frontier.—*Translator's note.*

English officer, who was commanding the troops at Menin. I begged him to show all the respect due to the King. He seemed to understand me, though he could not speak a word of French nor I of English. The King thanked the escort, and ordered them a considerable present.

My farewell with his Majesty was very painful. He addressed me most affectionately; I was very moved. The King presented me with a handsome snuff-box, bearing his portrait set in diamonds. I refused it, saying that the image impressed upon my memory would suffice. The King insisted, and said kindly:

'It is only a souvenir. Good-bye, my dear Marshal; I am grateful for your devotion.'

'Good-bye, Sire,' said I in reply; 'au revoir in three months' time.'

Not a year had passed since the King had returned to his country when he quitted it for the second time. His restoration had produced acclamations and transports of joy; it seemed to promise happy days to France after thirty years of disorder produced by the results of a revolution which shook the world, and which finished by coming round again to its starting-point. France, however, had conquered the Charter and constitutional privileges; the Charter was to have been the palladium of our liberties, it had been solemnly sworn to, and the first legislative act of the Government was to violate it. History will

teach you, my son, by what a series of faults, acknowledged by the King in his proclamation at Cambrai at the time of his second return, his Ministers displeased the nation. That is why Napoleon, on landing, found a large majority favourably disposed towards him, as unfortunately for France it was, but the country paid dearly for this sad and painful episode.

CHAPTER XXI.

Return to Lille—Defection of Mortier—A Trustworthy Messenger—At Béthune—Excelmans and Ney—Dessole's Nervousness—Interview with Davoût—Mathieu Dumas—The News of Waterloo.

To return to my story. After seeing the King cross the Lys and enter Menin, I returned with the escort along the road we had come. At about one-third of our journey I called a halt, to give the horses time to breathe, and then galloped back to Lille. I was summoned to the Duke of Orleans, where I found all the authorities, generals, and commanding officers. I was surrounded by people wishing for details as to the King's journey, which I gave.

During the night the Duke of Orleans and his excellent and lovable sister started for Tournai; they embraced us warmly. Marshal Mortier invited me to stay with him next day; I had need of rest, and accepted his invitation, and after dinner went to bed.

I have omitted to say that before the departure of the Duke of Orleans I asked him if he knew

whether the King had informed Monsieur of his determination to leave Lille. The Prince said he had probably not done so. I begged him to write to Monsieur, but he preferred that I should undertake it, as, from my not having quitted the King, I was in a better position to give a detailed account. The Duke of Orleans read and approved my letter, so I wrote a second copy, and sent one by each road, namely, by Arras and Béthune. We charged the Commissary-General of the King's Household, who had brought Monsieur's despatch, dated from Beauvais, with one of the letters, another person who had arrived at the same time was entrusted with the other, and both were strongly urged to lose no time in acquitting themselves of so important a mission, which concerned the safety of the Princes and the Military Household.

I awoke very late next morning, and sent my apologies to the Marshal Duke of Treviso for not being able to come to breakfast. I promised, however, to dine with him, and meanwhile begged him to let me know the news and to send me the paper. I never was so amazed in my life as when I received a message from him that he could not entertain me at dinner, as he had received orders to leave for Paris immediately, and to make over his command to Count d'Erlon. On receiving this extraordinary intelligence I hardly knew whether I was awake or dreaming, so surprised was I.

Nevertheless, I went straight to the Marshal, who confirmed the message he had sent, and told me that he had already made over his command. I blamed him for his precipitation, as I feared for the Princes who were bringing up the King's Household to Lille. The garrison had already adopted the tricoloured cockade, whether by order or spontaneously I know not.

General d'Erlon, who, I believe, commanded the division before the arrival of Marshal Mortier, had taken part with Napoleon, and had even made some attempt in his favour previous to the announcement of his landing. As this act of hostility to the Royal Government had failed, he had hidden himself, but was now quite ready to take over the command. Seeing that the Marshal was determined to start in a few hours, I returned home, sent for a passport and some horses, entered my carriage and drove off on the way to Béthune, so as to avoid the delays which would be occasioned along the direct road followed by Marshal Mortier.

The gates were closed, or at any rate that leading to Béthune was, the staff in Lille having forgotten to give orders that it should be opened for me. An officer on duty there obstinately refused to allow me to pass, notwithstanding my rank and my passport, which I showed him. I reprimanded him very severely, and threatened him with the future weight of my resentment, but

at the second Restoration I voluntarily forgot all about the matter. A good many of the privates, however, took up my cause, while I sent notice to the Commandant. At length another officer arrived and opened the gate.

On reaching the post-house at La Bassée I found no horses. I wished to push on with those I had, but they were dead-beat, and I had to give them a rest. While waiting in the inn I heard my name pronounced in a neighbouring room. Nobody knew who I was, but as I wished to find out what was the matter I walked in and made myself known. A tall young man said he had two letters of mine—they were franked with my name. He showed them to me, and I recognised them as those I had written the previous evening to Monsieur.

'By what accident,' I inquired, 'did those letters fall into your hands?'

He answered that the Commissary-General, to whom I had given them, and who was a great friend of his, had asked him to follow one or other of the two roads on the chance of meeting Monsieur, while he went off to visit a friend in the neighbourhood. It was evident that he cared very little for what might happen to his Royal Highness. I took possession of the letters, and, my horses being ready, pursued my journey.

It was eight or nine o'clock at night when I reached Béthune. The gates were closed, and

I had great difficulty in getting them opened. A portion of the King's Household was on the watch there, as a detachment of the garrison of Arras, apparently hostile, had presented themselves, and demanded admittance. The Duc de Berry, perhaps imprudently, had gone out and forced them to retreat; but there was reason to fear that they might come back at night in larger numbers.

Monsieur had learned, I know not how, that the King had quitted Lille the previous morning. He determined to go and join him by the shortest road with all the available troops. Notwithstanding advice to the contrary, they took abominable cross-country roads, where many carriages and guns remained fast in the mud, instead of following the high road to La Bassée, whence, by another good road, they could have reached Bailleul; but they were frightened by the sight of the Arras detachment, and dreading lest they should meet another from the garrison at Lille, they prepared to go across country. I heard that, before starting, Monsieur had decided to disband the remainder of the Household.

As soon as my arrival in the town became known, a large number of Generals and superior officers came to me for advice. As they were not in a position to defend themselves, I told them to put into execution the orders they had, to send notice to Lille and Arras so as to prevent hostilities, lay down their arms, distribute the

funds remaining to each company, or give up a few months' pay, in order that everyone might be enabled to procure plain clothes; for in uniform, and travelling singly, they ran the risk of being attacked at every step.

General Dessole was also at Béthune; he was in command of the National Guard at Paris, but, as he was also Secretary of State, he had started to rejoin the King at Lille. On hearing of his departure, he would neither follow him abroad nor return to Paris; he begged me to accompany him to Amiens, and we travelled together. The town of Doullens was crowded with cavalry, at the head of whom was General Excelmans, hastening after the King's Household. I had stopped to breakfast, and he came to see me, looking rather uneasy. He had had a cause of complaint against the Royal Government, and had consequently warmly embraced Napoleon's cause.

'What!' I exclaimed, 'do you mean to say that you would have the heart to fall, sword in hand, upon a few brave men who have remained true to their oaths? Why don't you arrest me? for I tell you I have kept mine, too, and will never serve the cause you have embraced. Think what you are doing. Sooner or later you must certainly be entangled in the meshes of the vengeance that cannot fail to overtake you. All the great Powers are marching towards our frontiers; tremble at the results of a reaction!'

These observations had little effect upon him, because he was excited and embittered. He was an excellent man at heart, very brave, but excitable; he would have done his duty well had he been employed. He promised me, however, that he would slacken his speed and respect individuals.

At the next stage an advance-courier met mine. He belonged to Marshal Ney, and there was, consequently, no hope of avoiding him. We were then serving very different sides. Just as our carriages were passing, he ordered his to stop.

'You are going to Paris?' he cried. 'You will be well received. The Emperor will welcome you.'

'I will spare him that trouble,' I replied. 'I shall not see him, nor shall I join his party.'

With these words we parted. My determination was fixed only to stop in Paris just long enough to attend to some business, to see no one, and to start again immediately for Courcelles. A few days were sufficient for me.

General Dessole would not remain in Amiens; he could not remember the name of a single friend in the town, and did not consider himself in safety there. He preferred to push on to the neighbourhood of Paris, and only enter it after nightfall. I stopped at Écouen. I underwent a close examination at the barrier, but my passport was in order, and we were allowed to enter. Poor

Dessole's memory again completely deserted him. He was much disturbed, and very anxious as to what might happen to him. Napoleon did not like him. I told him that at the end of the Rue de Clichy I should leave my carriage, and go in search of news. He fancied that we were followed; I did not care if we were. We separated, he still in doubt as to what he would do or where he would go, and not daring to return home.

I went to the house of your sister De Massa, but found no one at home, and had no better success at the houses of several other friends. I then decided to go home. Madame de Sémonville, who knew that my return was expected, was waiting for me, and I was much surprised at finding General Dessole with her. He told me that, when we separated, he had observed that our carriages were watched; he had therefore jumped into mine, and on entering my courtyard had found the same spies there. In answer to my porter, who asked what they wanted, they replied that they had orders to be there, but they had eventually taken their departure. I do not know whither Dessole had sent his carriage. I offered him a bed, which he refused, though he did not know where to betake himself, and was in terror of being arrested. For my own part, I feared nothing personally; I was guaranteed by the services I had rendered to Napoleon at the time

of his abdication at Fontainebleau. I had also heard from General Ricard, who had come from Vienna to Lille, bearing to the King the resolution passed by the Congress on March 13, that he had read a little pamphlet upon a visit to Elba, in which Napoleon had spoken of me in laudatory terms. General Ricard promised to give me this little publication, but I never received it.

In order to induce General Dessole to do something, I suggested to Madame de Sémonville that she should take him in her carriage and drive very fast through different quarters of the town, so as to put any spies off the scent. The advice was followed, they started, and I heard next day that Dessole had safely reached the country.

I gave my porter very strict orders to admit nobody but my family and a few friends whose names I mentioned to him. I sent my carriages to Courcelles, intending to follow them very shortly, and hastened to settle my business, when, at the moment that I least expected it, the porter announced Marshal Davoût, Minister of War. He had been foolish enough to believe that my orders could not be applicable to such a personage. In order to avoid the unpleasantness of this interview, I told him to say that I was unwell, and not able to see him. While I was uttering the words, the Marshal, who overheard them, entered.

'Too late!' said Davoût; 'I have to speak to you on very important matters.'

I had no choice but to listen. When we were alone, he began with some commonplace remarks; then, coming to Napoleon, he said that he was sent by him to reiterate to me the expression of his gratitude for the course I had pursued during the last agony of the Empire; that he wished to thank me himself, and that he offered me an interview, which should be either private or public, as I wished. I had no hesitation in refusing. I answered that I had been faithful to his cause and his person until the last moment; that I had now undertaken other engagements, which I should carry out with the same fidelity; that I felt sure that Napoleon knew me too well to imagine that I could be seduced by temptations of fortune, titles, or brilliant employment; that my determination was firm, and my mind made up, and that insistence was useless. I added, in a decided voice, that a continuance of this conversation, painful as it was to both of us, would be an outrage upon my honour, my feelings, and my pride.

'You appear, Macdonald,' said the Minister, 'to have tried and condemned us all very summarily! Speaking for myself, I entered into no engagement whatever with the Bourbons. I was in command at Hamburg when Napoleon fell; they permitted me to be attacked in scurrilous pamphlets, to which I replied. I have never seen the King, nor have I received anything at

his hands. I am, therefore, free, and I embrace the cause of liberty, which I have long defended.'

'No doubt,' I answered, 'liberty and Napoleon are synonymous terms. These liberties will end by putting chains on our necks. We shall see Europe raised against us, drunk with revenge and resentment, from which, hitherto, France has been preserved merely by the Czar's authority. Did not the Charter ensure us all the liberty and independence we could desire? The institutions would have secured to us these two great bases of the social edifice. No doubt the Royal Government has committed errors; but consider the immensity of the peril into which we are about to be dragged, and judge for yourself whether these errors were of such a nature as to render a complete overturn necessary, and to call for an inquiry. I am wrong,' I added warmly; 'there will be no inquiry. Can France, divided as she is to-day, resist a coalition of foreigners and their armies?'

'But,' he argued, 'the Emperor assures us that Austria is on our side.'

'Either he deceives himself or he is deceiving you. Have you seen the declaration of the Congress of Vienna?'

'No.'

'Read it.'

'Is this an authentic copy?'

'It was sent to the King by Monsieur de Talleyrand. General Ricard brought it to Lille, where it was immediately printed, published, and advertised. I am surprised that it did not reach you by courier.'

'The deuce! This alters the case. May I take it with me?'

'You may; I have several copies.'

He retired. Although it was clear to me that he was shaken, he continued in the occupation of his post, and eventually had reason to repent of having done so. I was then able to do him some considerable service.

I renewed my orders to my porter, which were thenceforward carried out rigorously. General Mathieu Dumas, who had been chief of my staff when I commanded the Army of the Grisons, came to see me. He was refused admission. He was intimate with Marshal Davoût, whom he had recently served in the same capacity as he had me. I suspected that he was charged by Napoleon and the Marshal with a mission of the same nature; nor was I mistaken, for, finding that he could not see me, he wrote to me upon the subject, and added that he begged me to consent to an interview or else to go to the Tuileries. I answered so strongly, and giving such reasons for my refusal, as at length to secure my being left in peace. I was on very good terms with Mathieu Dumas. I was sorry not to see him; but, in our respective

positions, I should have been wrong to receive him.

During my work at Lille, and since my return, I experienced every now and then a difficulty in breathing, which gave me some inconvenience. It was a premonitory symptom of an attack of gout, which laid me up on the very day preceding that fixed for my departure. The attack was very severe. I should have been choked had they not succeeded in drawing it down to my feet. It caused me tortures, and lasted three months, so I was compelled to postpone my departure.

As soon as I was well enough I started, but stopped at a distance of six leagues from Paris to rest for a day. While there I heard of the disaster at Waterloo. As this catastrophe put the finishing stroke to Napoleon's political career, I renounced my intention of continuing my journey, thinking that I might assist in hastening the return of the King—our one hope of preventing anarchy.

CHAPTER XXII.

Secret Meetings—The Temporary Government—The Cockade Question—The King at Arnouville—The Secretaryship for War—Ministerial Candidates—Mission to Paris—Arch-Chancellor of the Legion of Honour.

EVENTS succeeded each other rapidly. The remains of the army were collected around Paris, Napoleon was once more compelled to abdicate, and a temporary Government established. This Government, wishing to gauge the opinions of the Generals, called a meeting, to which I was invited. I refused to attend it, as I had resigned my command to the King, and felt that, if I accepted the invitation, I should appear to be associating myself with recent events and recognising an order of things which my opinions would not allow me to support.

One of the first proceedings of this Government had been to raise new levies and organize battalions of federates, who soon adopted a bullying, threatening manner towards all who were not in agreement with them—that is to say, the partisans of Royal Government. I decided to return secretly

NAPOLEON
(1815)

Paris for Richard Bentley and Son 1892

Printed by Ch Wittmann Paris

to Paris, so as to be on the spot and better able to profit by chance events. I entered it at night, and took shelter with one of my aides-de-camp. So well hidden was I that next day everyone knew where I was! This discovery did me no harm; on the contrary, it brought about an interview with Monsieur Hyde de Neuville, who brought me (better late than never) a note from the Duchesse d'Angoulême, then in London, and unlimited powers from the King, with a nomination to a membership in a secret Government, which was to regain authority as soon as possible. Monsieur Hyde de Neuville, who had quitted Ghent a month previously, had been to London in the hope of finding means of returning to France. They were fighting on the frontier, so it would have been imprudent to attempt to enter there.

Several secret meetings were held in my house, of which I had openly retaken possession. We had many supporters in the capital, and it was proposed to risk a Royalist movement. I was opposed to it, as I did not see how we were to struggle against the temporary Government with Fouché at its head, and also because the army was still too exasperated to abandon the cause into which it had been dragged.

Our party consisted of Marshal Oudinot (Duke of Reggio), of Messieurs de Sémonville, D'André, Du Bouchage, and Baron Pasquier, with one or

two others whose names I have forgotten. Baron Pasquier entered while we were discussing the advantages of, and objections to, attempting a rising. He brought Monsieur de Vitrolles with him; both had just come from Fouché. They declared that the movement was unnecessary; that the Duke of Otranto (Joseph Fouché) was in the interests of the King; that he had received from him plenary powers later than ours; that our intentions were known, our every step watched, and that we should infallibly fail. Baron Pasquier added that in a few days we should have by force things that we might vainly attempt to obtain by other means.

Monsieur de Vitrolles confirmed what he said, and they added that they enjoyed the full confidence of the Duke of Otranto, who did nothing without asking and taking their opinion. Monsieur de Vitrolles was an ultra-Royalist, and was therefore above suspicion.

We decided to do nothing, but thought it would be only proper to inform the King of the reason why we took no steps. One of us was to be deputed to go to his Majesty, and I was asked to undertake the mission; I agreed. Fouché was informed of this next day; he wished to see me. I at first felt very strong disinclination to such an interview, but was persuaded to agree to it, as I was informed that I should be told of many things for the King which could not be entrusted to

paper. The capitulation of Paris and an armistice had just been arranged; the French army was retiring across the Loire.

At the appointed hour I went to the Tuileries, where the temporary Government held its sittings. I expected to be received privately, but I found the Duke of Otranto and some of his colleagues amid a number of Generals and others. Several came to greet me. A heated discussion ensued. I treated them very severely, reproaching them for the misfortunes under which France was groaning, and accusing them of having provoked the strangers, who in two days would be masters of Paris. They all talked at once, and such nonsense that at last Fouché took me aside, and said:

'Never mind them; they are a set of fools.'

One of his colleagues called to me, in a loud voice:

'Monsieur le Maréchal, you are going to see the King. Tell him that what we want is independence, the tricoloured cockade and——'

I did not hear the remainder, contenting myself with a shrug of my shoulders. The days of the temporary Government were numbered.

Fouché confirmed all that Pasquier and De Vitrolles had told me the previous evening at our meeting—he was working on behalf of the King. He begged me to assure his Majesty of his devotion and fidelity—to say that, if he had played a part

in recent events, it was only in order to serve him better. He urged me to impress upon him the advisability of coming quickly, and of preceding the foreigners, if possible, so as to check any movement by his presence. He added that, if the King wished to give an agreeable surprise to the nation, and thus attract the army to himself, he should wear the tricoloured cockade, which he ought to mind the less as he had worn it before the emigration. He ended by asking me to go and see Davoût, Commander-in-chief and Minister for War, who was expecting me, and would give me my passport. I took leave of Fouché, and went to the War Office.

Marshal Davoût received me warmly. He told me that the effective force of the army that was going to the other side of the Loire amounted to 150,000 men and 30,000 horses, with 750 pieces of ordnance; that he would place this imposing force at the King's service if he would leave them the tricoloured cockade and wear it himself; that the great majority of people in France were deeply attached to these colours, under which they had so often fought victoriously; that that would be the best means of regaining the affection of all citizens worthy of the name; and that his Majesty might then give the army a chief of his own choice, if it did not please him to leave him (Davoût) at its head.

I promised, as I had done to Fouché, to relate

faithfully to the King all that I had heard; but I added that I doubted his accepting the conditions laid down.

As a matter of policy, I am still convinced that the adoption of these colours, on the occasion of the first Restoration, would have saved France from the calamities that weighed so heavily upon her; but at such a moment, in presence of the allies, could the King honourably decide upon such a course? Although policy excuses everything, even the greatest mistakes, one had been committed at the first Restoration, and perhaps, also, at the second, because this was not clearly understood. It cannot be said that the mistake was committed a second time owing to want of good advice. The King was inclined to give way when I saw him, but the counsellors he brought from Ghent dissuaded him.

I started with Monsieur Hyde de Neuville; although we were serving the same cause, I was far from sharing his extreme opinions. A staff-officer passed us through the outposts, and it was with a feeling of sorrow that I found myself among those of the foreigners.

It was believed that the King was at Cambrai; but that very day he had come to sleep at Arnouville, a few leagues from Paris. His Ministers preceded him; I met them rather on this side of Louvres. They halted on learning who I was. They had no news from Paris, and that which I

brought appeared to them so important as to make them anxious that the King should stop at Gonesse, whither we went to wait for him.

His Majesty embraced me very cordially, praising the fidelity I had maintained towards him. He gave me a private interview, which lasted for a full hour. The King could not get over his surprise at finding the importance that was attached to so apparently trivial a thing as the cockade—'a plaything' he called it.

'But, your Majesty,' said I, 'were you only playing when you once adopted and wore these colours?'

'The circumstances were very different,' he replied. 'At that time I had to master the Revolution.'

'And to make use of it,' I hastily remarked, 'on your first return. The circumstances are the same now. Moreover, were not these in former days the colours of the Royal Family, and did not the Dutch receive them from Henry IV.?'

'Yes,' answered the King; 'but they were the livery colours of his house.'

'No doubt your Majesty will also remember that at the gates of the capital the same monarch remarked that "Paris was well worth a Mass"?'

'Certainly; but it was not a very Catholic speech.'

Finally the King said he would consult his Ministers and allies, and took me on with him to Arnouville.

After dinner, Monsieur, the Duc de Berry, the principal officers, and some of the Ministers came in. The King said :

'My brother, my nephew, here is our friend the Marshal; embrace him.'

Monsieur did it with very good grace, but his son displayed some embarrassment and reluctance. I do not know whether he thought the favour too great, or whether he remembered the discussion we had had before the departure of the King. Conversation turned naturally upon existing circumstances and the causes that had produced them. Everybody indiscriminately, but especially the army, was accused of having joined a colossal plot to upset the Royal Government and restore Napoleon. I, on the other hand, maintained that the faults of which I could speak boldly, since they had been avowed boldly in the proclamation of Cambrai—prodigality, injustice, abuses, favours distributed without discernment, violation of the Charter, haughtiness, contempt—had contributed to embitter the army and a portion of the nation; that even had Napoleon not appeared, there would have been risings, as they had been preluded by unmistakable tokens. I declared, with the same boldness, that certain Generals had not followed a straight line, to use the expression of Count Ferrand; that when they found their influence spreading, the appearance of their old leader had sufficed to turn all their heads, as a spark might

create a conflagration; that, on the whole, the officers were not guilty; and that, in acting as they had done, they simply followed the regimental money-chests. A proof, an unanswerable proof, that there had been no plot was contained in the fact that during the Hundred Days no one had boasted of having had anything to do with it. Had it been otherwise, men would have been proud of it, and publicly solicited rewards. Surely those who had done wrong would not have been kept from self-glorification by vanity or indifference.

'There is much truth, my brother, in what the Marshal says,' remarked the King; but the audience did not appear convinced. The King dismissed us.

Next day I saw several of the Ministers privately; they appeared uncertain what to advise, but to me it seemed clear that they had already resolved to reject the proposals I had brought the previous day to Gonesse. Monsieur de Talleyrand, who had been sent to Neuilly to the allied Generals, had returned to give an account of his mission. A council had been held immediately upon his arrival, and after a short deliberation he started again for Neuilly, no doubt in order to announce the result to his allies. I learned that Fouché had gone there also, more probably to treat for his own private matters than for those of France.

I attacked the Ministers immediately upon the subject of the colours. They somewhat awkwardly admitted that the presence and contrary opinion of the allies had placed an invincible obstacle in the way. It became obvious that, if we could no longer impose acts of government, we must submit to accepting those of the conqueror. Several of them, Baron Louis, the Marquis de Jaucourt, and others, invited me to a conference in the open air, and I learned that they were charged to reconstruct the Ministry, and to offer me the Secretaryship for War. The Duc de Feltre was standing not far from us. I pointed him out, and said:

'There is the man with the best right to it.'

'No,' said Baron Louis; 'we will not have as a colleague a man who, in a speech in the Chamber of Peers, under a representative Government, dared to proclaim that "What the King wills, the Law wills."'

I had myself heard these remarkable words; and this resuscitation of a superannuated maxim, dating from the time of absolute monarchs, had produced considerable murmurings against, and some abuse of, their author.

I at first pleaded my incapacity, the condition of France and of the army. I declared plainly that, foreseeing as I did acts of severity, I would not consent to be made the instrument for applying them to men rather unfortunate than guilty; that,

in short, I had neither strength, courage, nor capacity to support such a burden. They pressed me, but to no purpose; they then exhibited great regret, which I had no reason for not believing sincere, and begged me to name somebody. There were few Generals who had taken no part in this Revolution. I named them, and left the choice to them—Mortier, Oudinot, Gouvion St. Cyr, Dessole, and some others whom I do not now recollect. They desired my opinion upon the subject of the two last. I had no connection with nor any feeling for or against either.

'Is St. Cyr fond of work?' they asked. 'People say he is lazy.'

'I am not aware of it. He is a man of great military capacity, firm, honest, jealous of other people's merit. In the army he is regarded as what is vulgarly called a "bad bed-fellow." In the coldest manner imaginable he allowed his neighbours to be beaten without attempting to assist them, and then criticised them afterwards. But this opinion, not uncommon among soldiers, is perhaps exaggerated, and he is admitted to have wits, calmness, and great capabilities.'

He justified this opinion both in the army and at the War Office.

Dessole seemed, at the moment, to be more in favour with my interlocutors. His character was gentler, more trusting than the other's; he also possessed greater administrative qualities, having

generally occupied the post of chief of the general staff. But under existing circumstances, and after so great an alarm, it was indispensable to select a man who combined firmness and conciliation. The former of these qualities should predominate, and it was just that one in which Dessole was lacking. He had recently given proof of this in my presence when I brought him back from Béthune to Paris—hesitating, undecided, not knowing what to do. However, he afterwards became President of the Council and Foreign Secretary.

Loud were the railings against France and the army, as I have mentioned in my account of the conversation the foregoing evening; those who were about the Princes and who had emigrated vowed vengeance, though I must add that their vengeance was to be brought about by means of the allied armies. For the sake of truth I must add that the Ministers with whom I conferred displayed great moderation, and lamented with me the disaster of Waterloo, and the yoke that the foreigners were preparing for the shoulders of our country.

During our conversation, from which this digression has carried me away, we were struck by a sudden uproar rising from the courtyard of the castle. We hastened up and saw General Lagrange, who had only one arm, struggling with some guards of the blue and red corps. They

were abusing him for not having followed to Ghent a company of *mousquetaires*, of which he was commander, and were tearing off the emblems of his rank. We ran to his assistance, but the Duc de Feltre, who was close at hand, had already delivered him from the hands of these madmen. I expressed in round terms my indignation and my opinion of their cowardice in attacking a mutilated officer; I told them that they should exhibit their bravery in presence of and against the enemy, and not against a man who had given proof of his on many battlefields. As soon as the King was informed of the occurrence he sent down an expression of his indignation, and his intention of inflicting punishment; at the same time he sent for me. This incident naturally broke off our conference.

The King began by thanking me for the firmness I had displayed towards his guards, but I stopped him by saying that it was the Duc de Feltre who had put an end to the outrage to which General Lagrange had fallen a victim, that I had come up too late, but soon enough, however, to lecture his guards as they deserved. He then said that he had ordered an inquiry, and would punish the guilty severely.

'But,' he continued, 'I had another motive in sending for you. You told me that Monsieur Fouché would make over the government to me if I would agree to the conditions you were

charged to submit to me. I cannot speak very plainly just now, because I must deliberate with my allies; but you understand that my dignity will not suffer me to take the reins from his hands. Return, therefore, to Paris, tell him to make over his powers to you, and that I will not fail to requite the services he has recently done me.'

I knew that the Duke of Otranto was at Neuilly in conference with the allied Generals and the Prince of Benevento (Talleyrand). I had the intelligence from Beurnonville. Apparently the King was ignorant of the fact, for he started, but soon recovered, and said:

'Very good; if he be away you will see his colleagues, and notify my intentions to them.'

'But, sire, they will do nothing in the absence of their leader, and they are sure not to be all of the same opinion.'

'Go, all the same. If you do not see them, remain in Paris; in the contrary event, come back as soon as possible and inform me of what has happened.'

I bowed, and was about to start upon this mission, when he stopped me, and said:

'My dear Marshal, there is yet another service which I am going to ask of your zeal;' and, giving me a folded paper that was lying on his writing-table, he continued:

'This is your nomination as Arch-Chancellor of the Legion of Honour. It was presented to

me by Monsieur de Talleyrand, and I signed it at Roye.'

I refused this office for the same reasons as those I had previously given in refusing the Ministry of War. At the word 'Ministry' the King seemed surprised, but said with great kindness that he considered me equally worthy of either, and insisted so much that I ended by giving way. He largely increased the dignity of the office by restoring to it the title of a Secretaryship of State, and permitting it to have direct communication with the Sovereign. These privileges had existed under the Empire, but had been suppressed at the Restoration; the title had been reduced to that of Chancellor only, and the officer could only communicate with the King through the Minister of the Household. I was to be dependent upon the President of the Council, inasmuch as his counter-signature was necessary.*

* I think I have already related in its place the question concerning the orphanages founded for the daughters of members of the Order. I have not leisure to read over again what I have written on this subject, from a bad habit I long since contracted. I write a great deal and very rapidly; I should discover many mistakes, but in order to correct them I should have to erase them or recommence my work, and I should never have time enough, although I rise very early. The secret is that I know the value of time, and never waste it. However, do not imitate my bad habits; write less and more correctly. But, after all, these historical notes are for you alone, and you will make allowances for your father.—*Note by Marshal Macdonald.*

When this matter was settled I started for Paris to execute the mission with which the King had charged me.

On the way I reflected upon what had happened during the morning. Why, on the one hand, were the Ministers I have quoted so anxious to secure my services, while, on the other, the King pressed me so earnestly to accept the Arch-Chancellorship? He, clearly, was but the echo of Monsieur de Talleyrand, who was interested in keeping me out of the Government, where I should have been too much in his way; but as the King, apparently, wished that I should hold some office, the Prince of Benevento suggested me for the Legion of Honour. It was clear that some intrigue, of which his colleagues were kept in ignorance, was concealed under this business. The matter had been arranged between the King and the Minister, who in his haste had forgotten to countersign the appointment. I did not think well to have this informality put right. It was now useless, as I was already in office. The document has remained in the same state ever since.

On the road I had to endure the grievous spectacle of, and to pass through, an enemy's camp. I also passed General Dessole, wearing the uniform of the Commander of the Parisian National Guard. He was going to pay his respects at Arnouville, and was uneasy as to what

reception he might find; we exchanged a few words, and I was able to reassure him. As a matter of fact, he was retained in his post, and next time I saw him he was in good spirits, and had recovered his courage.

According to my anticipations, I found neither the Duke of Otranto (Fouché)—who was at Neuilly — nor his colleagues in the temporary Government. They had met that morning for the last time. Since my mission had now no object, I remained quiet.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Second Entry into Paris—The Army of the Loire—The Ordinances—Execution of Ney—An Anecdote of Drouot—Warrants of Arrest—Difficulties at Bourges—Feeling among Napoleon's Soldiers—End of the Disbandment—Release from Bourges—Mission to Lyons—A Startling Confession.

EARLY next morning a courier brought me an order to be at St. Denis at mid-day. I started in uniform, followed by a saddle-horse, when, at the turning from the Chemin de la Révolte, opposite the castle of St. Ouen, I perceived the royal carriages and escort, coming out of St. Denis, and following the direct road. I mounted my horse and rode across country, catching up the procession just as it was entering the village of La Chapelle. The King waved his hand to me in a friendly manner, and so did Monsieur. Marshal St. Cyr and some Generals surrounded the carriage. I joined them.

The reception by the Parisians was less demonstrative than at the first entry. On the boulevards they were even colder than in the suburbs and the Rue St. Denis. At that point

Marshal Moncey joined the procession. The King turned away his head from his salute, and Monsieur withdrew his hand indignantly when the Marshal advanced respectfully to take it. He was in disgrace for having continued in office during the Hundred Days.*

On reaching the Tuileries I was much surprised, and no doubt others were also, at seeing close by the door of the throne-room the Duke of Otranto, to whom the King gave his hand as he passed! I was not less surprised at learning that on the previous evening he had been appointed Minister of Police.

I had heard on the road that St. Cyr was to have the War Office. It was a very good choice, but from the state of mind in which I had left the Ministers after our interview in the park at Arnouville, I rather expected it to have been given to Dessole, towards whom they seemed inclined. These events happened on July 8.

A few days later I was installed as Arch-Chancellor of the Legion of Honour, and entered upon my functions. I did not, however, take possession of the palace, as it was in the hands of the allies.

The army had retired to the other side of the Loire, and took its name from the river. Its Commander, Marshal Davoût, Prince of Eckmühl,

* It is greatly to the honour of Marshal Moncey that he boldly refused to take part in the trial of Marshal Ney.

had made it take the oath and put on the white cockade. He then resigned. Eyes seemed turned to me to take his place; the King sent for and proposed it to me. I realized all the weight attaching to so thorny and difficult a command, for now there was no longer any question of fighting an enemy, but of fighting opinions, and to induce the army to submit to disbandment, which was being openly discussed, only, it was said, this disbandment was to take the shape of a formation of soldiers and officers into new corps, to be called legions.

I pointed out to his Majesty how inconvenient to myself personally, and how little in the interests of the State, such an appointment would be. My objections were anticipated. The King did his utmost to remove them, but it was not an easy task. I had always borne a strong affection for this army, notwithstanding its errors, and perhaps because it realized them, and I had to expect opposition to the proposed measures, and excitement secretly kept up by the allies, who were anxious to re-open hostilities, so as to have an excuse for crossing the Loire and wasting a new country; and last, there was a feeling against me, because I had taken no part in the unhappy conflict of the Hundred Days. I have since had proofs that I was mistaken as to this last point; the army appreciated my character, my honesty, and my friendly feeling towards

it, and respected my opinions and conduct. It remembered that a year previously I had worked in the interests of the Emperor and his family, and that I had been the last to acknowledge the new order of things. I owed Napoleon nothing; he had long neglected me, and left me under the burden of a sort of disgrace; but he was in trouble, and I forgot everything.

The King insisted so strongly, so obstinately, upon the personal service he begged me to do him—those are his own words—that he overcame me. I consented, but upon two solemn conditions. Firstly, that I should have absolute freedom of action; secondly, that I should never be called upon to act as the instrument in any steps that might be taken against individuals, still less that I should be charged with their execution. After these two essential points were settled, the King sent me to the War Office for my instructions.

After expressing great satisfaction at hearing that I had yielded to the King's wishes, Marshal St. Cyr told me that he could not conceal the importance of this command, of which the Prince of Eckmühl could endure no more; that his entreaties to be relieved became more and more pressing by every courier, and that he begged me to hasten my preparations and go to Bourges as soon as possible. The impolitic ordinances of July 25, whereby several Generals and other persons who had taken an active part in the Hundred

Days were banished or brought up for trial, had been published, and, will it be believed? these sentences had been pronounced upon a report from Fouché, Duke of Otranto, Minister of Police—from him who before and during the period had so largely participated in the events with which they were filled! I was very anxious as to the effect these measures would have on the army. A consolation, however, was awaiting me at Bourges—Massa, your sister's husband, had, much against his will, been sent there as Prefect; his wife had accompanied him, and I went to stay in their house.

My arrival created great excitement and general uneasiness, which I dissipated next day when I received a visit from the corps, headed by the Prince of Eckmühl, whom I had informed of all that had passed. The Generals feared that my despatch-box was filled with orders of arrest or deprivation. I undeceived them by saying that I had too high an opinion of them to believe that any among them could injure me by thinking me capable of deceiving them. They assured me that it had never entered the head of one of them.

'Let those,' I continued, 'who are unfortunate enough to appear on these fatal ordinances take measures for their safety; they have not a moment to lose. At any minute orders may arrive of which I shall be powerless to prevent the execu-

tion ; the only thing I can do is to give them this warning and facilitate their means of escape.'

Several of them were present, and profited by my advice. Amongst others were Generals Laborde and Brayer, the latter of whom had commanded at Lyons on the occasion of the catastrophe of March 10. It was he who had told me, at the decisive moment, that all measures had been taken to prevent my departure. He was now much ashamed, and stammered out his excuses.

Fly !' was my answer.

General Drouot* not only disdained to flee, but

* Of General Drouot (not to be confounded with General Drouet, Count D'Erlon, recently referred to in these pages) an interesting account is given in Odeleben's 'Campaign of 1813':

'Drouot, the well-known Commander of the Artillery of the Guard, was a very remarkable man. . . . He always had a small Bible with him to read, which constituted his chief delight, and he avowed it openly to the persons in the Imperial suite—a peculiarity not a little remarkable in that staff, and the admission of which required no small degree of moral courage. He was not without a certain shade of superstition, for, as Napoleon usually brought him forward at the most hazardous moment, and he was always at the head of his troops, his situation was full of peril; and he was careful on such occasions to array himself in his old uniform of General of Artillery, as he had long worn it, and never received any injury. When near the enemy he always dismounted from horseback, and advanced on foot in the middle of his guns, and by a most extraordinary chance neither himself nor his horse was ever wounded. His modesty was equal to his knowledge, his fidelity to his courage, and he gave a shining

insisted upon forestalling his arrest by going and surrendering himself at the Abbaye prison. Arguments were unavailing to turn him from this determination, which he put into execution. As it fell out, he acted wisely, for at his trial he was acquitted. He was the most upright and modest man I have ever known—well educated, brave, devoted, simple in manners. His character was lofty and of rare probity.

However, in the case of political crimes, for so they are called by those who triumph, the wisest plan is to flee from immediate vengeance. One can explain afterwards. Time (which allays passions and party-spirit) and intervening events co-operate in producing indulgence and forgetfulness. This was exemplified in the case of many of those who were aimed at by the ordinances. It would have been the case with the unhappy Marshal Ney,* had he profited immediately by the passports procured by his wife from the leaders of the foreign army. She implored him on her knees to lose no time in making his escape, but he answered curtly:

proof of the latter quality by accompanying Napoleon to Elba amidst the general defection by which the more exalted objects of the Emperor's bounty were disgraced.' (*Quoted by Sir A. Alison in his 'History of Europe,'* vol. ix.) This was the man inscribed by the Bourbons for possible massacre like Marshal Ney.

* The Prince of the Moskowa, shot early in the morning of December 7, 1815.—*Translator's note.*

'Upon my word, madam, you are in a great hurry to get rid of me.'

The unfortunate widow herself told me this characteristic story. Louis XVIII. told me and many other people that when Ney took leave of him, he promised that if he could seize Napoleon he would send him back to the King in an iron cage. He was an intrepid commander, but very changeable in his mind and disposition. I quite believe that he made this remark, but am convinced that he would never have sullied his reputation by putting it into execution. He was too confident, and it cost him his life.*

* A painfully vivid account of this dark page in French history is given in the Comte de Rochechouart's 'Memoirs,' from which the following is abridged:

'I took upon myself,' says Rochechouart, 'without consulting the prisoner, to order up a carriage. The Marshal saluted us. I felt a great relief when I saw him in a blue overcoat, with a white neck-handkerchief, short black breeches, black stockings, and no decorations. I was afraid that he might have been in uniform, and that, consequently, it would be necessary to have it "disgraced," and to have torn off the buttons, epaulettes, and decorations. On seeing the bad weather, he said, smiling, "Here is a nasty day." Then turning round to the curé, who was drawing back to allow him to get into the carriage, "Get in, Monsieur le Curé; presently I shall precede you." The two officers of gendarmerie also got into the carriage, placing themselves on the front seat. At a few hundred paces from the railings of the Luxembourg, in the Avenue of the Observatory, the procession halted. Seeing the door opened, the Marshal, who expected to go to Grenelle, advised perhaps that a manifestation would be made in his favour, said, "What! already arrived?" He naturally refused

Speaking of General Drouot recalls to my memory an anecdote which he did not know, and which I related to him in 1820 when he came to see me at Contrexéville.

A few days before the fatal Battle of Leipsic I was dining at Dresden with the Emperor in the company of Murat and Berthier. As we were rising from table the Duke of Bassano arrived. Murat took the Emperor aside, and they talked excitedly for a few moments, when the Emperor, turning towards me, said :

'Ask the Duke of Tarentum ; he knows how infamously he behaved.'

They were talking about the Italian General Lecchi, who was accused of having caused the jeweller Caron to be shot at Barcelona, in order to seize his property; and, further, of having caused

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to kneel down and to let his eyes be bandaged ; he only asked Commandant Saint-Bras to point out to him where he should stand. He faced the firing-party, who held their muskets in the position "Ready!" and there, in an attitude which I shall never forget, so noble, so calm, so dignified, and without the least bravado was it, he took off his hat, and taking advantage of the short space of time left him by the Adjutant in moving to one side, and giving the signal to fire, he pronounced these few words, which I heard very distinctly: "*Frenchmen! I protest against my condemnation, my honour . . .*" At these last words, as he placed his hand on his heart, the reports of the muskets were heard ; he fell dead. A roll of the drums and the cries of "Long live the King!" which arose from the troops formed in a square, terminated this dismal ceremony. The Hero of the Beresina was no more.'

all those to be shot who took part in the assassination, so as to conceal every trace of the crime. This had occurred under my predecessor in Catalonia. An inquiry had been instituted; it was closed, and the documents relating to the case were taken to the central police-office at Barcelona.

I had just arrived to take up the command and Governor-generalship of the principality, when I received orders to forward all these documents to the Chief Justice. I then heard the story; so horrible was it that I could not credit it, and I said so to the Emperor.

'Indeed!' he exclaimed; 'it is only too true. The Chief Justice studied carefully all the evidence, and reported thereupon to me. The proof was complete, and had the scoundrel been brought to judgment, as I ought to have ordered him to be, he would have been sentenced to death. I refrained out of consideration for his family, which had rendered me some services during my Italian campaigns.' Then, turning to Murat, he said: 'You insisted upon his being let off because of your intimacy with this monster's sister. But rid me of him; I forbid you positively ever to employ him.'

Just then General Drouot was announced. He was aide-de-camp to the Emperor, and had been sent to Pirna to superintend the preparation of a bridge to be thrown across the Elbe, and had

orders not to return until it was completed. The Duke of Piacenza (Le Brun), another aide-de-camp, was at Meissen upon similar business.

'Sire,' said General Drouot, 'I come to inform your Majesty that the bridge will be finished in an hour.'

The Emperor, still excited by his discussion with the King of Naples, did not allow him to finish his sentence.

'What do I see!' he exclaimed in a passion, 'a general officer who has the honour of serving as my aide-de-camp setting the bad example of not completely carrying out my orders! You deserve to be dismissed! Go, sir! Return to Pirna, and do not let me see you again until the bridge is finished!'

The unlucky General saluted, and retired without a word. The Emperor seemed to have forgotten that he was not alone, for when he turned round he showed surprise, and immediately changed his tone.

'That is a good man,' he said; 'he is very distinguished, full of merit, modest, a first-rate mathematician. He will be a Member of the Institute at the first vacancy.'

Just as he was concluding this prognostication, of which after-events prevented the realization, the Duke of Piacenza arrived.

'Is the bridge ready?' asked the Emperor in a hard, imperious voice.

'It will be in two hours, sire,' was the reply.

Napoleon scarcely allowed him time to finish his answer. He was not angry now, but beside himself with rage. He sent him back to Meissen, but on rejoining us said nothing about a vacancy in the Institute.

The recital of this story has carried me far from my subject, to which I must return.

I carefully avoided everything that could resemble general or personal reproaches, but represented to my hearers the actual situation of France, the loads which were already weighing her down, the necessity of not adding to them, and also of not aggravating their own position. I said that their future depended upon themselves, that they had only to submit completely, and to second my efforts; that by so doing they would extenuate their former conduct, and that I would lose no opportunity of bringing forward the repentance they had displayed for having put France at the mercy of foreigners, and their zeal in remedying, so far as in them lay, and by their submission to the orders of the Government, our public misfortunes, and in helping me to re-establish order and discipline. They were moved by my honest and friendly words; they promised me their help, and kept their word. The most difficult task was to settle differences between themselves. They reproached each other with having mutually seduced and tempted them. I

intervened, in order to prevent this leaven of discord being introduced among the men, and added:

'As the faults and errors that have been committed are common to you all, it is useless to argue; the chief thing is to wipe out all recollection of them.'

There was already enough discontent and temper among the troops, without adding fuel to the flames. The interview had lasted a long time; I saluted them, and they withdrew, all more or less satisfied.

I augured well from it; the first step had been difficult, and the result surpassed my hopes. Conversations at dinner and private audiences did the rest, and thenceforward we worked very well together.

At the end of the day some body-guards in disguise arrived, armed with orders to the heads of the gendarmerie to assist the bearers in securing the arrest of the persons named in the ordinances. They showed me their instructions and authority.

'On no account show yourselves,' I said; 'for in the present state of the army I will not answer for your safety. Let me quiet them down; I have already made a good beginning. Remain hidden here. I will order you some food, and will have mattresses prepared in a room for you. To-morrow we will see what to do.'

They were far from suspecting my intentions; for greater safety, I had their door locked. I

knew not where to find the threatened men, to warn them. The Prince of Eckmühl had just left me; he was to start next morning for the country, but I did not know where, to await the turn of events. I went straight to him, and gave him warning.

'Send word at once,' I said, 'to all those whose names are on the lists. Send couriers into the cantonments; this will give them a start of eight or nine hours.'

I do not know how they managed it, but they all got clear away — even General de Laborde, who was laid up with gout at the time.

Next day I set the officers of the body-guards at liberty.

'Now, gentlemen,' I said, 'you can execute your mission.'

They withdrew, but discovered, somehow, I know not by what means, the warnings that had been given, and returned a few days later to reproach me with their imprisonment, which had brought about the failure of their mission. They would report it, they said.

'Do so,' I answered with a laugh; 'but you owe me some thanks, for I saved you from the certain danger that awaited you had your disguise been penetrated.'

'We would have braved it,' said one of them.

'Then why disguise yourselves?'

This stinging answer disconcerted them.

'Since your mission has now lost its object,' I continued firmly, 'go, in your own interests, quit the neighbourhood of the army at once. Go and make your report.'

They withdrew without another word. I never heard what report they presented; the Government maintained silence upon the point, but the late Duc de Berry, who still bore me a grudge for our discussions, wrote to me very bitterly. He ended by saying that, were he commanding in my place, he would have all the recalcitrants thrown out of window; to which I replied that one would not have time to do it, to say nothing of the risk of having to lead the way one's self.

All my care was now given to soothing down irritation. I was laden with work, overwhelmed with complaints from the authorities respecting persons under them. Events had marched so fast that the departments situated beyond the line of the armistice and the junction of the Loire and the Rhone had not been warned; they had no stores, and were living from hand to mouth without any security for the next day's provisions. I rearranged the cantonments and enlarged them, but without gaining any substantial relief. Things had not simply been eaten, they had been wasted, and this is always sure to happen when there is no regular distribution of rations. However, I

should never end if I once began entering into all these details. I will go on with my story.

The decision concerning the disbandment came at last. Submission was fairly general. I softened the bitterness of it as far as lay in my power—consoling some, encouraging others. My whole correspondence with the Government is a standing proof of my efforts, and of the interest I took in each individual case; and when the men who had sided with the army were oppressed and abused by the reactionary party, I warmly defended them in the Chamber of Peers*—all that is in print. I also had to defend myself personally against strenuous opponents in the matter of that unlucky disbandment question. The successful party wished to reward me with the post of *Grand Veneur*, or by the gift of a fine house or property. They insisted; I sternly refused. My pride rebelled at such a proposal. The idea of accepting a reward, when I was helping to deprive so many brave men of their active pay, that is to say, of part of their livelihood!

The Royal Guard had just been created. I was one of the four Major-Generals. Officers had been sent out to recruit among the former Im-

* See my speeches on the Recruiting Bill, of which I was reporter, on the Bill dealing with the interests of absentees, and especially my opinion expressed in the discussion on the Bill concerning electoral colleges.—*Note by Marshal Macdonald.*

perial Guard, which consisted of the *élite* of the army. A large number joined the new regiment to finish their term of service and secure their pensions. They were models of steadiness and good conduct.

The battalion which had been formed the previous year, to serve as a guard to the Emperor at Elba, was much distrusted, but was eventually admitted like the others. I had ordered it to come to Bourges, where I had opportunities of talking to many officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates. They all assured me that, believing themselves exiled eternally, they sighed for a chance of returning to France. They were therefore delighted at learning, after their embarkation, that they were about to make a descent upon our Mediterranean coast. As the Emperor was warmly received everywhere, and as they met with no obstacle, they were happy to tread once more the soil of their country.

'But,' I asked them, 'if you had met with resistance, if you had been repulsed, would you have embarked again if possible?'

'Oh no!' they replied. 'The opportunity of quitting that island was too good to be missed.'

'But if you had met with opposition, would you have attacked, fired?'

'No, no! We would have committed no acts of hostility; that would have ruined our cause.

We would have laid down our arms and asked leave to retire to our families.'

'And have abandoned the Emperor?'

'We had given him sufficient proof of our devotion. Everyone for himself. Besides, he caused his own misfortunes and ours, and we were not called upon to continue his victims.'

'But it was of your own choice and of your own free will that you sided with him.'

'No doubt; but at that time we thought it was a garrison, and that we should be relieved. When we reached the island, and learned that it was to last for life, and as we were miserable there, we were seized with discouragement and sorrow. We therefore embarked gladly, not knowing whither we were bound; but at any rate we were changing our place!'

With the exception of the majority of the officers, who, from affection or gratitude, had attached themselves to the fortunes, good or bad, of the Emperor, and who would have been delighted to accompany him to St. Helena, all were overjoyed to find themselves at home again. Such were the constant expressions of these soldiers, whom I frequently questioned until they left me.

The disbandment was carried out nearly everywhere without difficulty; but some regiments of the ex-Guard mutinied, as did the *Chasseurs à cheval*

and the Grenadiers at Aubusson. Their pretext, whether true or false, was the settlement of their pay, which no doubt was much in arrear, and the Government resources were slender. Power had been given, at my request, to a financial agent to advance a portion of the money. I tried to borrow the remainder, and offered security to the inhabitants of Bourges; but despite the respect and esteem in which they held me, I could not raise more than 60,000 francs (£2,400).

Order and submission were re-established in the regiment of Chasseurs by dint of some arrests and a display of authority made by the Lieutenant-General commanding the 20th military division at Périgueux. With the exception of a few men led astray by a subaltern officer, who, with them, was made prisoner a few days later, the Grenadiers returned to duty of their own accord when they discovered that they were being dragged into a criminal enterprise. The officer paid for his mistake with his life.

The disbandment came to an end at last. It was not without a cruel pang that I witnessed the disappearance of this valiant and unfortunate army, so long triumphant. No trace now remained of it. An ill-wind had blown and dispersed it like dust; we were now at the mercy of the foreigners! The loss in rank and file was but temporary. Departmental legions were to be

created. The loss in material was immense, incalculable, including as it did arms, harness, saddlery, cavalry and draught horses, that were handed over to farmers who had not the wherewithal to feed those they already possessed. They were taken into the meadows and woods, and abandoned there. Saddles and harness were heaped pell-mell in convents and damp sheds. Eighty-two thousand infantry were disbanded; only thirty thousand muskets found their way back into the depots; sabres, pistols, musketoons, shoulder-belts, all vanished in the same proportion. I had before pointed out what would happen; the Government turned a deaf ear.

I had now been six months at Bourges; all was finished, and I begged leave to resign. I was kept waiting another two months, as it was considered that my presence served as a moral force in the absence of any physical. At length I returned to Paris, and once more took up the duties of Arch-Chancellor of the Legion of Honour.

There is no personal circumstance connected with my military or political career that deserves mention after this period (February, 1816), except that I believe a suggestion was made of offering me the Ministry of War, thinking that the man who had so well succeeded in reconciling feelings

and duty during the important operation of disbandment could alone create anew a good army. Some interviews took place, but resulted in nothing.

In 1819 or 1820 I was sent to preside over the electoral district of Lyons, as I had previously done over Bourges. I went thither against the grain, and not without a struggle. It was considered important. I know not why. The King's intervention was even required, and I yielded.

When the Duc de Richelieu quitted the Ministry, he proposed to the King that I should succeed him in the Presidency of the Council, and take at the same time the Foreign Office. Monsieur Roy, at that time Minister of Finance, who retired with the Duc de Richelieu, confided this to me, but the Duke himself never mentioned it. I would certainly not have accepted the position ; my devotion would not have carried me to those lengths.

I remember a conversation that I had on one occasion at St. Cloud with Monsieur, by whom I was sitting at the table of Louis XVIII. During his reign the chief officers, as well as those in waiting, were admitted, by right, to have luncheon with him. Monsieur said to me :

'Before the Revolution, you served in the Irish Brigade ?'

'Yes, Monseigneur.'

'Nearly all the officers emigrated?'

'Yes, Monseigneur.'

'Why did you not do the same? What kept you in France?'

'I was in love, Monseigneur.'

'Ha! ha!' he said, laughing; 'so you were in love, sir?'

In the same tone, and with an expressive glance, I replied:

'Yes, like other people; I was married, I was about to become a father; and, besides, your Royal Highness knows that people emigrated for many reasons. They were not in all cases compelled by public feeling to leave the country, especially the young officers, like myself at that time, who cared very little about politics. They sometimes went for very bad reasons, debts, etc.' I continued in the same tone: 'I must make a confession to your Royal Highness.'

'What is it?'

'It is that I love the Revolution.'

Monsieur started, and changed colour; I hastened to add:

'I detest its men and its crimes. The army took no part in it. It never looked behind, but always ahead at the enemy, and deplored the excesses that were being committed. How could I fail to love the Revolution? It was that which raised and made me what I am; without it,

ERRATUM.

By a clerical error the plate illustrating the death of Prince Poniatowski in the River Elster has the name of the river Elster misprinted at the foot as the Elbe.

should I now enjoy the honour of sitting at the King's table next to your Royal Highness ?'

Monsieur, who had recovered himself and his good temper, clapped me on the shoulder, exclaiming:

'You are quite right; I like your honesty.'

May, 1826.

THE END.

A

LIST OF SOME OF

THE PRINCIPAL BATTLES

FOUGHT BY THE FRENCH

ON SEA AND LAND,

1792—1815.

THE CAMPAIGNS OF DUMOURIEZ.

1792. *Valmy and Jemappes.*
1793. *Neerwinden.*

Dumouriez subsequently joined the enemies of his country.

THE CAMPAIGNS OF MOREAU.

1793. *The Rhine.*
1794. ——
1796. *Biberach.*
1797. *The Rhine.*
1799. *Italy.*
1800. *Hohenlinden,*

the fair fame of which was to be sullied by Moreau's treason to his country, in 1813, which justified earlier suspicions.

THE CAMPAIGNS OF JOURDAN.

1793. *Wattignies.*
1794. *Fleurus.*
1796. *Germany.*
1799. *Stokach.*

Like MASSÉNA'S, Jourdan's after operations are merged in the events of the Empire.

THE FIRST CAMPAIGNS OF GENERAL BONAPARTE.

1796-7. *Italy.*
1798-9. *Egypt.*
1800. *Marengo.*

THE SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGNS OF THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON.

1805. *Austerlitz.*
1806. *Jéna.*
1807. *Friedland.*
1808. *Spain.*
1809. *Wagram.*

THE UNSUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGNS OF THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON.

1812. *Moscow.*
1813. *Leipzig.*
1814. *France.*

1815. *Waterloo.*

SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL BATTLES FOUGHT BY THE FRENCH,

1792—1815.

Where a battle continued for more than one day, the date of the deciding day is usually given. The name of the opposing General, on either side, is frequently that of the General conducting the operations of the day, not that of the Commander-in-chief, if not present at the engagement.

		1792.	
Sept. 17.	*Vaux.*	*Dumouriez.*	*Duke of Brunswick.*
Sept. 20.	*Valmy.**	*Kellermann.*	*Duke of Brunswick.*
Nov. 6.	*Jemappes.*	*Dumouriez.*	*Archduke Albert.*
		1793.	
March 18.	*Neerwinden.*	*Dumouriez.*	*Prince Cobourg.*
May 8.	*St. Amand.*	*Custine.*	*Prince Cobourg.*
May 23.	*Valenciennes.*	*Custine.*	*Prince Cobourg.*
[*June* 10.	*Saumur.*†	*Berthier.*	*Larochejaquelein.*]
Aug. 18.	*Lincelles.*	—	*Lake.*
Sept. 7.	*Dunkirk.*	*Houchard.*	*Marshal Freytag.*
Sept. 14.	*Pirmasens.*	*Moreau.*	*Duke of Brunswick.*
Sept. 15.	*Courtrai.*‡	*Houchard.*	*Beaulieu.*
Sept. 22.	*Truellas.*	*Dagobert.*	*Ricardos.*
Oct. 13.	*Weissenberg.*	*Moreau.*	*Duke of Brunswick.*
Oct. 16.	*Wattignies.*§	*Jourdan.*	*Prince Cobourg.*
[*Oct.* 23.	*Chateau Gonthier.*	*L'Echelle.*	*Larochejaquelein.*]
Dec. 7-14.	*Before Perpignan.*	*Davoût.*	*Ricardos.*

* From which victory Marshal Kellermann took the Dukedom of Valmy in 1808.

† The Battles of the Rebellion in La Vendée are shown in brackets.

‡ After this battle General Houchard was condemned by his countrymen, and shot.

§ General Jourdan was superseded after this victory by General Pichegru. In 1793 Lyons was besieged and captured.

[*Dec.* 10.	*Le Mans.*	*Marceau.*	*Larochejaquelein.*]
Dec. 19.	*Toulon.**	*Dugommier.*	*Lord Mulgrave.*
Dec. 26.	*Geisberg.*	*Hoche.*	*Duke of Brunswick.*
		1794.	
April 24.	*Cambrai.*	*Chappuis.*	*Duke of York.*
April 25.	*Tournay.*	*Moreau.*	*Clairfait.*
May 16.	*Turcoing.*	*Souham.*	*Prince Cobourg.*
May 23.	*Pont-a-Chin.*	*Pichegru.*	—
June 1.	*Lat.* 47° 48′ *N., Long.* 18° 30′ *W.*	*Villaret Joyeuse.*	*Lord Howe.*
June 26.	*Fleurus.*	*Jourdan.*	*Prince Cobourg.*
Aug. 19.	*Kaiser-Lautern.*		
Sept. 17.	*Boxtel.*	*Moreau.*	*Duke of York.*
Oct. 2.	*Ruremonde.*	*Jourdan.*	*Clairfait.*
Nov. 4.	*Nimeguen.*	*Pichegru.*	*Duke of York.*
Nov. 20.	*Before Figueras.*	*Pérignon.*	*Courten.*
		1795.	
July 21.	*Quiberon.*	*Hoche.*	*Puisaye.*
Oct. 29.	*Mayence.*	—	*Clairfait.*
Nov. 24.	*Loano.*	*Schérer.*	*Devins.*
		1796.	
April 12.	*Montenotte.*	*Napoleon.*	*D'Argenteau.*
April 14.	*Dego.*	*Napoleon.*	*Beaulieu.*
April 14.	*Millesimo.*	*Augereau.*	*Colli.*
April 22.	*Mondovi.*	*Sérurier.*	*Colli.*
May 10.	*Lodi.*	*Napoleon.*	*Beaulieu.*
Aug. 5.	*Castiglione*† *and Lonato.*	*Napoleon.*	*Wurmser.*
Aug. 11.	*Neresheim.*	*Moreau.*	*Archduke Charles.*
Aug. 22.	*Teining.*	*Bernadotte.*	*Archduke Charles.*
Aug. 24.	*Amberg.*	*Jourdan.*	*Archduke Charles.*
Aug. 26.	*Friedberg.*	*Moreau.*	*Latour.*
Sept. 3.	*Wurtzburg.*	*Jourdan.*	*Archduke Charles.*
Sept. 4.	*Roveredo.*	*Napoleon.*	*Davidowich.*
Sept. 5.	*Calliano* (*a*).	*Napoleon.*	*Davidowich.*
Sept. 7.	*Primolano.*	*Napoleon.*	—
Sept. 8.	*Bassano.*‡	*Masséna and Augereau.*	*Wurmser.*

* Napoleon first appears on the scene at the capture of Toulon.

† Augereau was indebted to his exertions on this occasion for the title of Duke of Castiglione in 1808.

‡ Maret's title of Duke of Bassano was a diplomatic one, and recalls Talleyrand's satirical observation, 'In all France I know but one greater ass than Maret, and that is the Duke of Bassano.'

Sept. 16.	*Altenkirchen.**	*Marceau.*	*Archduke Charles.*
Oct. 2.	*Biberach* (*a*).	*Moreau.*	*Latour.*
Oct. 19.	*Emmendingen.*	*St. Cyr.*	*Nauendorf.*
Nov. 1.	*Calliano* (*b*).	*Vaubois.*	*Davidowich.*
Nov. 11.	*Caldiero.*	*Napoleon.*	*Alvinzi.*
Nov. 14-17	*Arcola.*	*Napoleon.*	*Alvinzi.*
Nov. 21.	*Castel Nuovo.*	—	—
		1797.	
Jan. 14.	*Rivoli.*†	*Napoleon.*	*Alvinzi.*
March 16.	*Passage of the Tagliamento.*	*Napoleon.*	*Archduke Charles.*
March 20.	*Cembra.*	*Joubert.*	*Kerpen.*
March 22.	*Tarwis.*	*Masséna.*	*Archduke Charles.*
		1798.	
Feb. 15.	*Rome.*	*Berthier.*	*Papal Troops.*
March 5.	*Berne.*	*Brune.*	*Erlach.*
July 21.	*The Pyramids.*	*Napoleon.*	*Mourad Bey.*
Aug. 1.	*The Nile.*	*Admiral Brueys.*	*Lord Nelson.*
Aug. 27.	*Castlebar.*	*Humbert.*	*Lake.*
Sept. 8.	*Ballinamuck.*	*Humbert.*	*Cornwallis.*
Oct. 7.	*Sidi Omân.*	*Desaix.*	*Mourad Bey.*
		1799.	
Jan. 22.	*Naples.*	*Championnet.*	*Mack.*
Feb. 18.	*El Arisch.*	*Reynier.*	*Mourad Bey.*
March 10.	*Jaffa.*	*Napoleon.*	—
March 25.	*Taufers.*	*Lecourbe.*	*Laudon.*
March 25.	*Stokach.*	*Jourdan*	*Archduke Charles.*
March 30.	*Verona.*	*Schérer.*	*Kray.*
April 5.	*Magnano.*	*Schérer.*	*Kray.*
April 16.	*Mount Thabor.*	*Napoleon.*	—
April 27.	*The Adda.*	*Moreau.*	*Mélas.*
April 27.	*Cassano.*	*Sérurier.*	*Mélas.*
May 20.	*St. Jean d'Acre.*	*Napoleon.*	*Sir Sidney Smith.*‡
June 5.	*Zurich* (*a*).	*Masséna.*	*Archduke Charles.*
June 19.	*The Trebbia.*	*Macdonald.*	*Suwarrow.*
July 21.	*Alessandria.*	*Moreau.*	*Bellegarde.*
July 25.	*Aboukir.*	*Napoleon.*	*Mourad Bey.*
Aug. 15.	*Novi.*§	*Joubert.*	*Suwarrow.*

* General Marceau was killed in this engagement.
† In reward of his exploits in Italy Masséna was created Duke of Rivoli in 1808.
‡ And Djezzar Pasha. § General Joubert was killed in this battle.

Aug. —.	*St. Gotthard.*	*Lecourbe.*	—
Sept. 19.	*Alkmaer.*	*Brune.*	*Duke of York.*
Sept. 25.	*Airolo.*	*Gudin.*	*Suwarrow.*
Sept. 28.	*Zurich* (*b*).	*Masséna.*	*Korsakow.*
Oct. 2.	*Bergen.*	*Brune.*	*Duke of York.*
Oct. 6.	*Near Haarlem.*	*Brune.*	*Duke of York.*
Nov. 1.	*Bogaz.*	*Verdier.*	— *Bey.*
		1800.	
March 20.	*Heliopolis.*	*Kléber.*	*Grand Vizier.*
May 3.	*Eugen.*	*Moreau.*	*Kray.*
May 5.	*Moeskirch.*	*Moreau.*	*Kray.*
May 9.	*Biberach* (*b*).	*St. Cyr.*	*Kray.*
May 16.	*Erbach.*	*Ste. Suzanne.*	*Kray.*
June 9.	*Montebello.**	*Napoleon.*	*Mélas.*
June 14.	*Marengo.†*	*Napoleon.*	*Mélas.*
June 19.	*Hochstadt.*	*Moreau.*	*Kray.*
Dec. 3.	*Hohenlinden.*	*Moreau.*	*Archduke John.*
Dec. 14.	*Salzbourg.*	*Lecourbe.*	*Archduke John.*
Dec. 16.	*Herdorf.*	*Richepanse.*	—
Dec. 19.	*The Traun.*	*Lecourbe.*	*Lichtenstein.*
Dec. 21.	*Neukirchen.*	*Augereau.*	*Klenau.*
Dec. 26.	*The Mincio.*	*Brune.*	*Bellegarde.*
		1801.	
March 21.	*Alexandria.*	*Menou.*	*Abercromby.*
May —.	*Near Cairo.*	*Belliard.*	*Grand Vizier.*
		1802.	
	St. Domingo.	*Le Clerc.*	*Toussaint.*
	Guadaloupe.	*Richepanse.*	*Pélage.*
		1803.	
	St. Domingo.	*Rochambeau.*	*Dessalines.*
		1804.	
	The Establishment of the Empire.		

* Marshal Lannes took the title of his dukedom, in 1808, from this battle.

† General Desaix was killed in this battle, the success of which, to the French, was largely due to a cavalry charge made by Kellermann (afterwards Count), a son of the Kellermann of Valmy.

The names of Marengo, Austerlitz, Jéna, and Friedland were reserved by Napoleon, who had personal direction on these memorable occasions.

1805.

July 22.	*Off Finisterre.*	*Villeneuve.*	*Sir Robt. Calder.*
Oct. 7.	*Donauwerth.*	*Murat.*	*Auffemberg.*
Oct. 9.	*Guntzbourg.*	*Ney.*	*Mack.*
Oct. 11.	*Hasslach.*	*Dupont.*	*Archduke Ferdinand.*
Oct. 13.	*Memmingen.*	*Soult.*	*Spangen.*
Oct. 14.	*Elchingen.**	*Ney.*	*Laudon.*
Oct. 20.	*Ulm.*	*Napoleon.*	*Mack.*
Oct. 21.	*Off Trafalgar.*	*Villeneuve.*	*Viscount Nelson.*
Oct. 29.	*Caldiero (b).*	*Masséna.*	*Archduke Charles.*
Nov. 11.	*Diernstein.*	*Mortier.*	*Kutusoff.*
Nov. 16.	*Grund.*	*Murat.*	*Bagrathion.*
Dec. 2.	*Austerlitz.*	*Napoleon.*	*The Emperors.*

1806.

July 6.	*Maida.*	*Régnier.*	*Sir J. Stuart.*
Oct. 10.	*Saalfeld.*	*Lannes.*	*Prince Louis.*
Oct. 14.	*Auerstadt.†*	*Davoût.*	*King of Prussia.*
Oct. 14.	*Jéna.*	*Napoleon.*	*Hohenlohe.*
Oct. 16.	*Nordhausen.*	*Soult.*	*Kalkreuth.*
Oct. 17.	*Halle.*	*Bernadotte.*	*Duke of Wurtemberg.*
Oct. 28.	*Prentzlow.*	*Murat.*	*Hohenlohe.*
Nov. 6.	*Lübeck.*	*Bernadotte and Soult.*	*Blucher.*
Dec. 24.	*The Ukra.*	*Napoleon.*	*Osterman Tolstoy.*
Dec. 24.	*Nasielsk.*	*Rapp.*	*Osterman Tolstoy.*
Dec. 24.	*Lochoczyn.*	*Augereau.*	*Sacken.*
Dec. 26.	*Pultusk.*	*Napoleon.*	*Kamenskoi.*
Dec. 26.	*Golymin.*	*Davoût.*	*Gallitzin.*

1807.

Jan. 25.	*Mohrungen.*	*Bernadotte.*	*Benningsen.*
Feb. 5.	*Liebstadt.*	*Murat.*	*Lestocq.*
Feb. 6.	*Landsberg.*	*Murat.*	*Bagrathion.*
Feb. 8.	*Preussich-Eylau.*	*Napoleon.*	*Benningsen.*
Feb. 16.	*Ostrolenka.*	*Savary and Suchet.*	*Essen.*
May 14.	*Before Dantzig.*	*Lannes and Oudinot.*	*Kamenskoi.*

* From which battle Ney took his title of duke, in 1808.

† From which battle Davoût took his title of duke, in 1808. The Duke of Brunswick was mortally wounded on this occasion.

June 8.	*Heilsberg.*	*Napoleon.*	*Benningsen.*
June 14.	*Friedland.*	*Napoleon.*	*Benningsen.*
		1808.	
May 2.	*Massacre at Madrid.*	*Murat.*	*The Populace.*
June 14.	*Alagon.*	*Lefebvre.*	*Palafox.*
July 14.	*Medina de la Rio Seco.*	*Bessières.*	*Cuesta.*
July 20.	*Baylen.**	*Dupont.*	*Castanos and Reding.*
July 29.	*Massacre at Evora.*	*Loison.*	*The Inhabitants.*
Aug. 14.	*Saragossa.*	*Verdier.*	*Palafox.*
Aug. 17.	*Roliça.*	*Laborde.*	*Wellesley.*
Aug. 21.	*Vimiera.*	*Junot.*	*Wellesley and Burrard.*
Nov. 10.	*Espinosa.*	*Napoleon.*	*Blake.*
Nov. 10.	*Burgos (battle).*	*Soult.*	*Belvidere.*
Nov. 23.	*Tudela.*	*Napoleon.*	*Castanos.*
Dec. 16.	*Cardadeu.*	*St. Cyr.*	*Reding.*
Dec. 21.	*Molinos del Rey.*	*St. Cyr.*	*Reding.*
		1809.	
Jan. 13.	*Ucles.*	*Victor.*	*Infantado.*
Jan. 16.	*Coruña.†*	*Soult.*	*Sir J. Moore.*
Feb. 17.	*Igualada.*	*St. Cyr.*	*Reding.*
Feb. 25.	*Valls.*	*St. Cyr.*	*Reding.*
March 28.	*Medellin.*	*Victor.*	*Cuesta.*
April 9.	*Thaun.*	*Davoût.*	*Hohenzollern.*
April 14.	*The Basque Roads.*	*Villaumez.*	*Earl of Dundonald.*
April 16.	*Sacile.*	*Viceroy of Italy.*	*Archduke John.*
April 20.	*Abensberg.*	*Lannes.*	*Hiller.*
April 21.	*Landshut.*	*Napoleon.*	*Hiller.*
April 22.	*Eckmühl.‡*	*Napoleon.*	*Archduke Charles.*
May 3.	*Ebersberg.*	*Masséna.*	*Hiller.*
May 8.	*The Piave.*	*Viceroy of Italy.*	*Archduke John.*
May 22.	*Aspern and Essling.§*	*Napoleon.*	*Archauke Charles.*

* Up to this time Dupont had possessed a high reputation for courage and generalship, and was thought by Napoleon himself to have an early chance for a bâton.

† Sir J. Moore was killed at the moment of his victory.

‡ Davoût's title of Prince of Eckmühl was taken, in 1809, from this battle.

§ Masséna's title of Prince of Essling was taken, in 1810, from this battle.

May 23.	*Alcaniz.*	*Suchet.*	*Blake.*
May 24.	*Lessing.*	*Viceroy of Italy.*	*Jellachich.*
June 14.	*Raab.*	*Viceroy of Italy.*	*Archduke John.*
June 18.	*Belchité.*	*Suchet.*	*Reding.*
July 6.	*Wagram.**	*Napoleon.*	*Archduke Charles.*
July 11.	*Znaim.*	*Masséna.*	*Archduke Charles.*
July 28.	*Talavera de la Reyna.*	*Victor.*	*Wellesley.*
Oct. 24.	*Tamanes.*	*Marchand.*	*Del Parque.*
Nov. 12.	*Ocaña.*	*Mortier and Soult.*	*Areizaga.*

1810.

July 24.	*The Coa.*	*Ney.*	*Crawfourd.*
Sept. 26.	*Busaco.*	*Masséna.*	*Wellesley.*

1811.

Feb. 19.	*The Gebora.*	*Soult.*	*Mendizabel.*
March 6.	*Barrosa.*	*Victor.*	*Graham.*
April 3.	*Sabugal.*	*Masséna.*	*Wellington.*
May 5.	*Fuentes d'Onoro.*	*Masséna.*	*Wellington.*
May 16.	*Albuera.*	*Soult.*	*Beresford.*
Oct. 25.	*Saguntum.*	*Suchet.*	*Blake.*
Oct. 28.	*Aroyos de Molinos.*	*Gérard.*	*Hill.*
Dec. 26.	*Albufera.*†	*Suchet.*	*Blake.*

1812.

July 22.	*Salamanca.*	*Marmont.*	*Wellington.*
July 23.	*Mohilow.*	*Davoût.*	*Bagrathion.*
July 31.	*The Drissa.*	*Oudinot.*	*Wittgenstein.*
Aug. 8.	*Inkowo.*	*Sebastiani.*	*Platoff.*
Aug. 15.	*Krasnoi* (*a*).	*Napoleon.*	*Barclay de Tolly.*
Aug. 17.	*Smolensko.*	*Napoleon.*	*Barclay de Tolly.*
Aug. 19.	*Valentina.*	*Ney.*	*Barclay de Tolly.*
Sept. 7.	*Borodino - (Moskowa).*‡	*Napoleon.*	*Kutusoff.*
Sept. 8.	*Mojaisk.*	*Napoleon.*	*Kutusoff.*
Oct. 18.	*Polotsk.*	*St. Cyr.*	*Wittgenstein.*
Oct. 18.	*Winkowo.*	*Murat.*	*Kutusoff.*
Oct. 19.	*The Dwina.*	*St. Cyr.*	*Steinhill.*

* Berthier was rewarded, in 1809, with the title of Prince of Wagram.
† From which Suchet took the title of his dukedom in 1812.
‡ Ney was created Prince of the Moskowa in 1813.

Oct. 24.	*Malo-Jaroslawitz.*	*Viceroy of Italy.*	*Doctoroff.*
Nov. 3.	*Wiasma.*	*Davoût.*	*Milaradowitch.*
Nov. 14.	*Witepsk.*	*Victor and Oudinot.*	*Wittgenstein.*
Nov. 17.	*Krasnoi* (*b*).	*Napoleon and Davoût.*	*Kutusoff.*
Nov. 21.	*Borissow* (*a*).	*Dombrowsky.*	*Lambert.*
Nov. 27.	*Borissow* (*b*).	*Partonneaux.*	*Wittgenstein.*
Nov. 28.	*The Beresina.*	*Ney and Victor.*	*Tchichagoff.*
Dec. 12.	*Kowno.*	*Ney.*	*Platoff.*

1813.

Jan. 16.	*Marienwerder.*	*Viceroy of Italy.*	*Wittgenstein.*
Feb. 13.	*Kalisch.*	*Regnier.*	*Winzingerode.*
April 4.	*Mockern* (*a*).	*Viceroy of Italy.*	*Wittgenstein.*
May 2.	*Lutzen.*	*Napoleon.*	*Wittgenstein.*
May 19.	*Koenigswartha.*	*Bertrand.*	*Barclay de Tolly.*
May 20.	*Bautzen.*	*Napoleon.*	*The Czar.*
May 21.	*Wurschen.*	*Napoleon.*	*The Czar.*
May 22.	*Reichenbach.*	*Napoleon.*	*Milaradowitch.*
May 31.	*Hamburg.*	*Vandamme.*	*Tetterborn.*
June 21.	*Vittoria.*	*Jourdan.*	*Wellington.*
July 28.	*The Pyrenees.*	*Soult.*	*Wellington.*
Aug. 23.	*Gross Beeren.*	*Oudinot.*	*Bernadotte.*
Aug. 25.	*Leibnitz.*	*Gérard.*	*Chernicheff.*
Aug. 26.	*The Katzbach.*	*Macdonald.*	*Blucher.*
Aug. 27.	*Dresden.**	*Napoleon.*	*Schwartzenberg.*
Aug. 30.	*Culm.*	*Vandamme.*	*Barclay de Tolly.*
Aug. 30.	*Villach.*	*Viceroy of Italy.*	*Hiller.*
Sept. 6.	*Dennewitz.*	*Ney.*	*Bulow.*
Sept. 12.	*Villa Franca.*	*Suchet.*	*Bentinck.*
Sept. 16.	*Goerda.*	*Pécheux.*	*Walmoden.*
Sept. 17.	*Nollendorf.*	*Napoleon.*	*Schwartzenberg.*
Oct. 16.	*Mockern* (*b*).	*Ney.*	*Blucher.*
Oct. 17.	*Plauen.*	*St. Cyr.*	*Ostermann Tolstoy.*
Oct. 18.	*Leipzig.*†	*Napoleon.*	*Schwartzenberg.*
Oct. 26.	*Volano.*	*Viceroy of Italy.*	*Hiller.*
Oct. 30.	*Hanau.*	*Napoleon.*	*Wrede.*
Nov. 7.	*The Nivelle.*	*Clausel.*	*Wellington.*
Dec. 13.	*St. Pierre.*	*Soult.*	*Hill.*

* Two men took part against France in this battle—Jean Victor Moreau and Jomini. Moreau, who was born a Frenchman, was killed in it.

† Marshal Prince Poniatowski perished in this battle — wounded, and then drowned.

1814.

Jan. 27.	*St. Dizier (a).*	*Napoleon.*	*Blucher.*
Jan. 29.	*Brienne.*	*Napoleon.*	*Blucher.*
Feb. 1.	*La Rothiere.*	*Napoleon.*	*Schwartzenberg.*
Feb. 8.	*The Mincio.*	*Viceroy of Italy.*	*Bellegarde.*
Feb. 10.	*Champaubert.*	*Napoleon.*	*Olsufieff.*
Feb. 11.	*Montmirail.*	*Napoleon.*	*Sacken.*
Feb. 14.	*Vauchamps.*	*Napoleon.*	*Blucher.*
Feb. 15.	*Les Echelles.*	*Marchand.*	*Bubna.*
Feb. 17.	*Nangis.*	*Napoleon.*	*Parthes.*
Feb. 18.	*Montereau.*	*Napoleon.*	*Wittgenberg.*
Feb. 27.	*Bar-sur-Aube.*	*Oudinot.*	*Schwartzenberg.*
Feb. 27.	*Orthez.*	*Soult.*	*Wellington.*
March 7.	*Craon.*	*Napoleon.*	*Blucher.*
March 9.	*Laon.*	*Napoleon.*	*Blucher.*
March 14.	*Rheims.*	*Napoleon.*	*St. Priest.*
March 20.	*Tarbes.*	*Soult.*	*Wellington.*
March 20.	*Limonet.*	*Augereau.*	*Hesse Homburg.*
March 20.	*Arcis-sur-Aube.*	*Napoleon.*	*Schwartzenberg.*
March 26.	*Fere Champenoise.*	*Marmont and Mortier.*	*Schwartzenberg.*
March 28.	*St. Dizier (b).*	*Napoleon.*	*Winzingerode.*
March 30.	*Paris.*	*Marmont and Mortier.*	*Blucher and Schwartzenberg.*
April 10.	*Thoulouse.*	*Soult.*	*Wellington.*

1815.

May 3.	*Tolentino.*	*Murat.*	*Bellegarde.*
June 16.	*Ligny.**	*Napoleon.*	*Blucher.*
June 16.	*Quatre-Bras.†*	*Ney.*	*Prince of Orange, Duke of Brunswick.*
June 18.	*Waterloo.*	*Napoleon.*	*Wellington.*
June 19.	*Wavres.*	*Grouchy.*	*Thielmann.*
July 1.	*Versailles.*	*Excelmans.*	*Sebastiani.*

About 260 battles are included in this list.

* General Bourmont (who had fought well in 1814) deserted to the enemy immediately before this battle.

† The Duke of Brunswick was killed in this battle, and Sir Thomas Picton mortally wounded. He survived, however, long enough to hear of Waterloo.

THE

MORE IMPORTANT SIEGES

DURING THE SAME PERIOD WERE THOSE OF

1793. *Mons.*
Lille.
Landau.
Thionville.
Verdun.

1793. *Dunkirk.*
Mayence.
[Lyons.]
Toulon.
Valenciennes, also 1794.

1794. *Namur.*
Landrecies.

1796. *Kehl.*

1797. *Mantua, also* 1799.

1798. *Malta, also* 1800.

1799. *Acre.*

1800. *Genoa, also* 1814.

1806. *Magdeburg, also* 1814.
Breslau.

1807. *Dantzig, also* 1813 *and* 1814.
Saragossa.
Strasburg.
Nice.
Gaëta.
Graudentz.

1808. *Saragossa, also* 1809.
Elbas.

1809. *Gerona.*
Lerida.

1810-12. *Cadiz.*

1811. *Badajos, also* 1812.
Tarragona, also 1814.

1812. *Ciudad Rodrigo.*
Burgos.

1813. *Pampeluna.*
St. Sebastian.
Dresden.
Torgau.
Wittenberg.
Stettin.
Zamosc.
Modlin.
Erfurt.
Custrin.
Glogau.

1814. *Hamburg.*
Antwerp.
Bergen-op-Zoom.
Pfalsbourg, also 1815.
Maubeuge.
Ancona.
Barcelona.
Metz.
Strasbourg.
Belfort.
*Soissons.**

Rome was [illegible] *attacked in* 1798; *Madrid in* 1808; *and Naples in* 1762, 1799, *and* 1806.

Vienna was occupied in 1805 *and* 1809, *Berlin in* 1806, *Moscow in* 1812, *Berne in* 1797, *Brussels in* 1792, *Dresden in* 1813, *Amsterdam in* 1794, *Frankfurt in* 1806, *Munich in* 1800, *Warsaw in* 1807, *Cairo in* 1798, *Lisbon in* 1807, *and the Dreadnought appeared in sight of Jerusalem in* 1799.

* By a curious coincidence the interests of France were [illegible] by generals of the name of Murcell.

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